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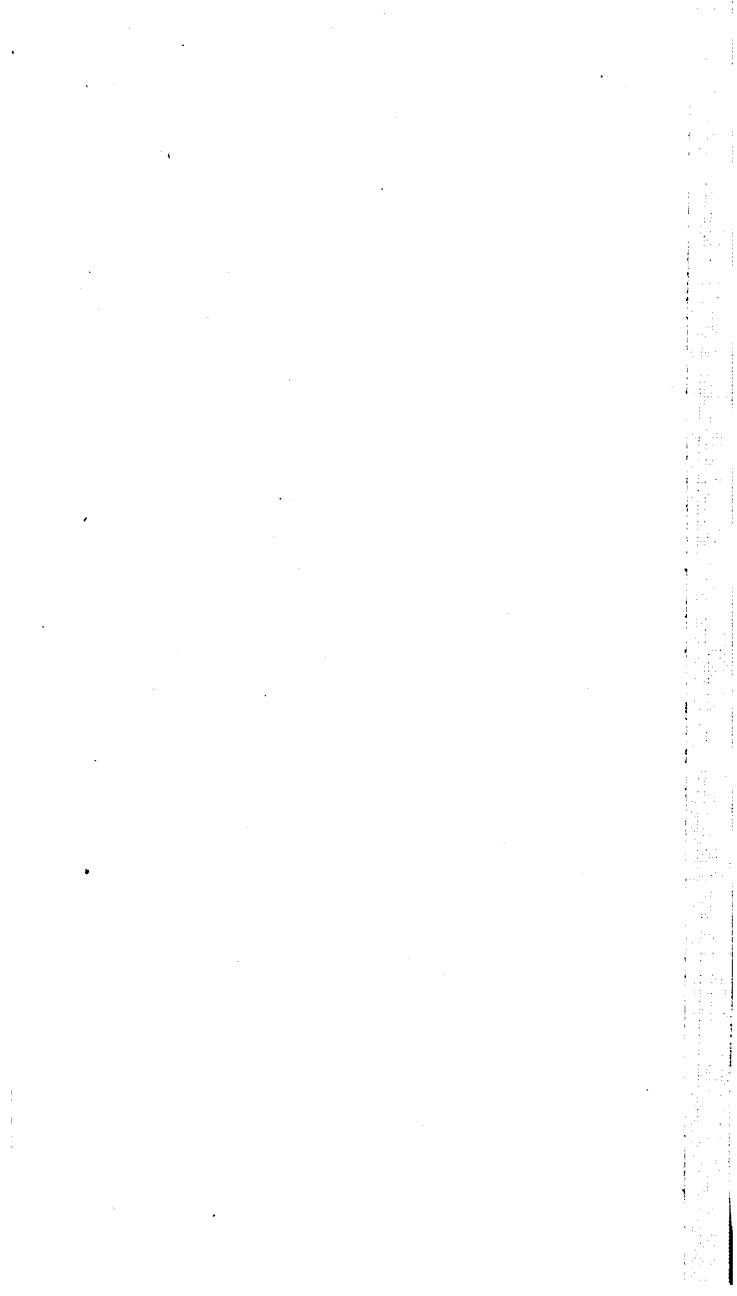
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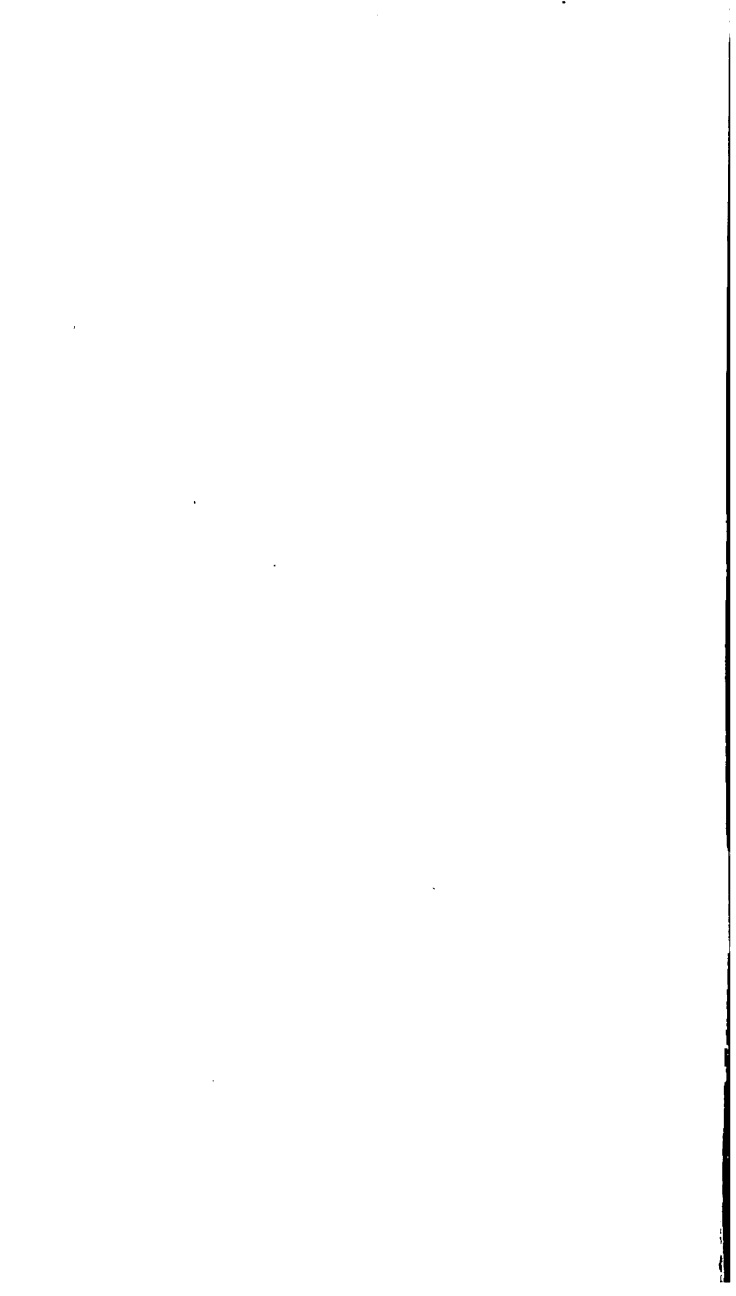
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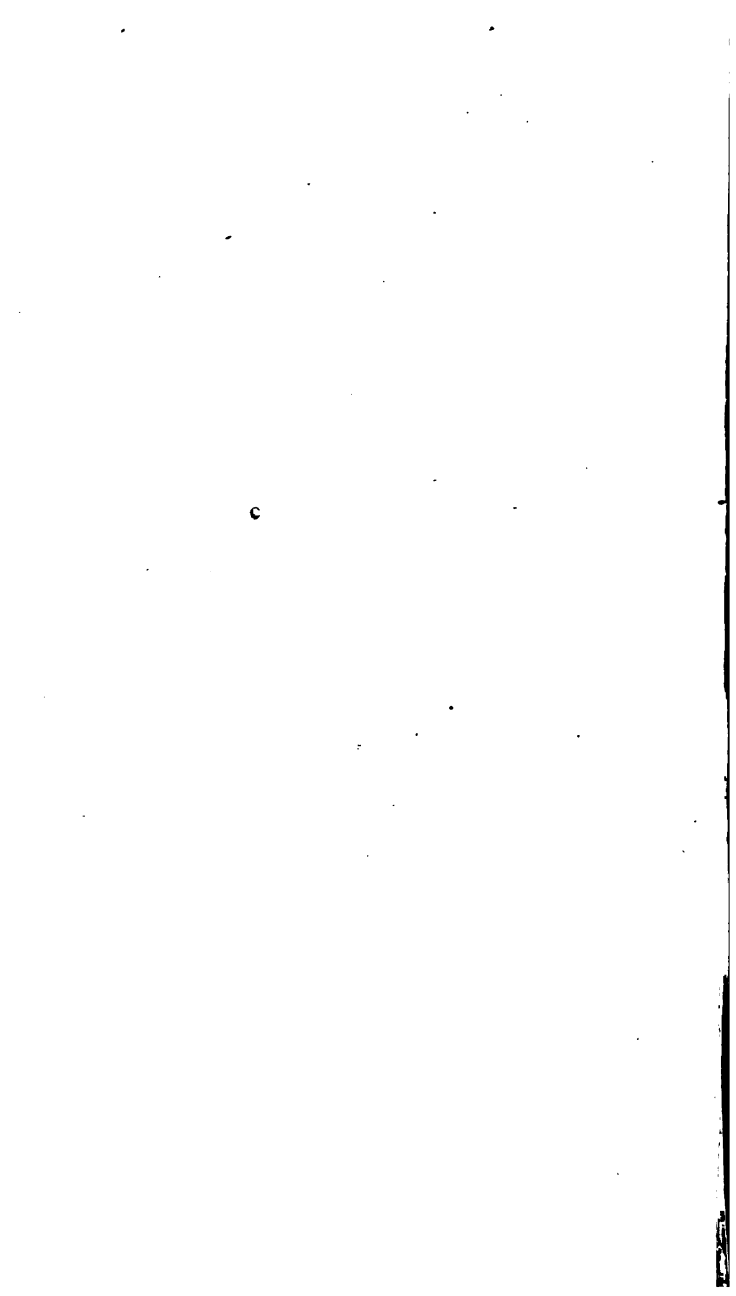
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THE
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES
OF
EYAM;

WITH A FULL AND PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF THE

GREAT PLAGUE,

WHICH DESOLATED THAT VILLAGE.

A.D. 1666.

BY WILLIAM WOOD.

"Some writer,—why I know not,—has styled this ancient village the Queen of the Peak. If it be so, alas, she is indeed a widowed one! for there she stands alone among the hills, the solemn monument of 'A MIGHTY WOE,' that still tingles appallingly in the ear of history, and embues the whole district with a spirit of pensive gloom."

RAMBLES IN THE COUNTRY.

LONDON:

THOMAS MILLER, NEWGATE STREET; SHEFFIELD, A. WHITAKER;
CHETERFIELD, J. ATKINSON; BAKWELL, J. GOODWIN;
AND THE AUTHOR, EYAM.

1842.

PRICE THREE SHILLINGS.

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SHEFFIELD: WHITAKER AND CO., PRINTERS.

DEDICATION.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,
TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM,

AND

TO HIS LORDSHIP THE EARL OF THANET,
LORDS OF THE MANOR OF EYAM,

THIS UNASSUMING, LITTLE VOLUME,

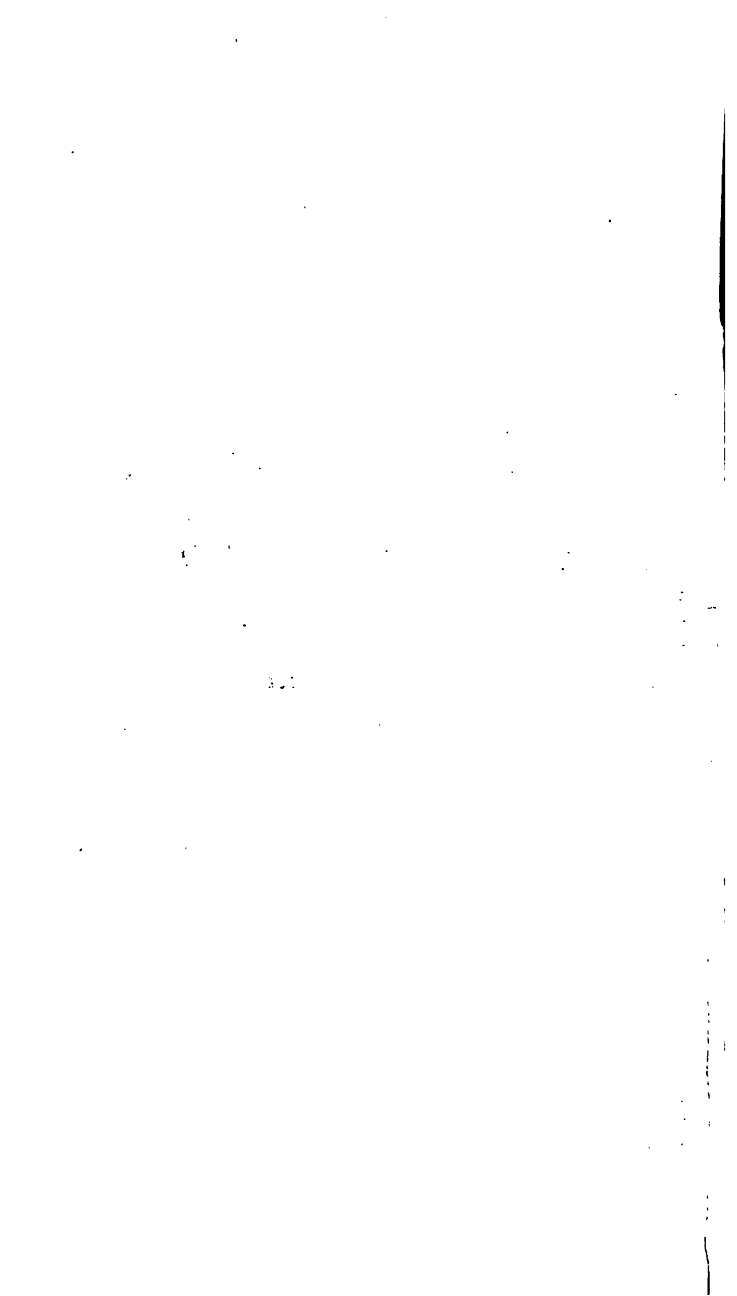
IS MOST HUMBLY

AND GRATEFULLY

DEDICATED,

BY THE

AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

COUNTRY villages, in a great measure, afford but few circumstances sufficiently important for historical compilation: indeed, general interest cannot be excited by occurrences of a purely local character; and, therefore, all histories of small places, divested of imaginary incidents, must be strictly confined to the notice of their respective inhabitants. A well-written history of Eyan, a sequestered village in the Peak, would, however, be well worthy of public perusal: this "little mountain city"—being "overshadowed by the spirit of old"—hallowed by the ever-present *shades* of the greatest of moral heroes—encircled with an enduring and a dazzling halo of genius, must ever render it a place of deep, general, and intense interest.

The awful circumstance connected with the local history of this romantic village—its desolation by the plague A.D. 1666,—has, from its occurrence, strongly elicited the attention and notice of a great portion of the sympathizing and thinking public. This may be inferred from the calamitous event having at sundry times called into action the highly classic pens of the following elegant authors:—Dr. Mead, Miss Anna Seward, Allan Cunningham, E. Rhodes, S. T. Hall, William and Mary Howitt, S. Roberts, J. Holland, and a many others, who have, in verse and prose, laudably endeavoured to perpetuate the sufferings of a joint number of mortals, who, like Codrus and Curtius, offered themselves up a self-sacrifice for the salvation of their country.

Highly commendable as are the brief descriptions of these illustrious authors, on this painfully interesting subject, they are, however, respectively deficient in ample detail,—in correct data,—in the enumeration of material circumstances,—and in being compiled from cursory, casual, and erroneous information: defects, which could have been avoided only by a long residence in the locality. To rectify the mistakes of preceding writers,—to introduce many hitherto omitted circumstances,—to snatch almost from oblivion a great number of incidents,—to collect into one body all the available information connected with that direful visitation, has been my humble attempt; and to whatever degree I may have succeeded, it must not be ascribed to paramount intellectual ability; but solely to having invariably resided amongst the

impressive memorials of that awful scourge. Thus circumstanced I have also had the advantage of hearing, a thousand times repeated, all the many traditions on that doleful subject.

It is to be regretted that a minute account of the occurrence was not taken nearer the time: and I cannot but sincerely wish, that the task had fallen into far more able hands even now.

The principal part of the following work has already been before the public in a series of chapters, published a few months ago in the *Sheffield Iris*. To the proprietors of that highly literary and liberal paper, I feel the most grateful sense of obligation. And the obliging favours of a few other inestimable friends are fully and justly appreciated, if here but briefly acknowledged.

An engraving of Cucklet Church, Mompesson's Well, Riley-graves, the Cross, and the Church, would be a great and pleasing addition to this work; but want of means has alone debarred me from thus complying to the demands of public taste.

This may, perhaps, be the most fitting and proper place to say, that in my former work,—“The Genius of the Peak,” a small volume, consisting of a variety of short poems, written in comparative childhood, there is much which my now more mature judgment would gladly expunge.

The frequent use of the egotistical “I,” in this production, may demand some reason or apology; but if I have not failed in other more important matters of taste, I shall not feel much compunction with being taunted on this head. Should the nice critic condescend to scan a few pages of this rather hastily written work, let him bear in mind my inappropriate situation in life for the attaining of philological perfection: and the utter impossibility in my case of bestowing what is so imperatively required in writing a work, namely, almost undivided attention. A few verbal errors (too glaring, however, to be attributed to the writer) I have discovered here and there in this work; but when too late for remedy.

If this, my little production, should be deemed unworthy of notice, let it be remembered that I can truly and justly say,

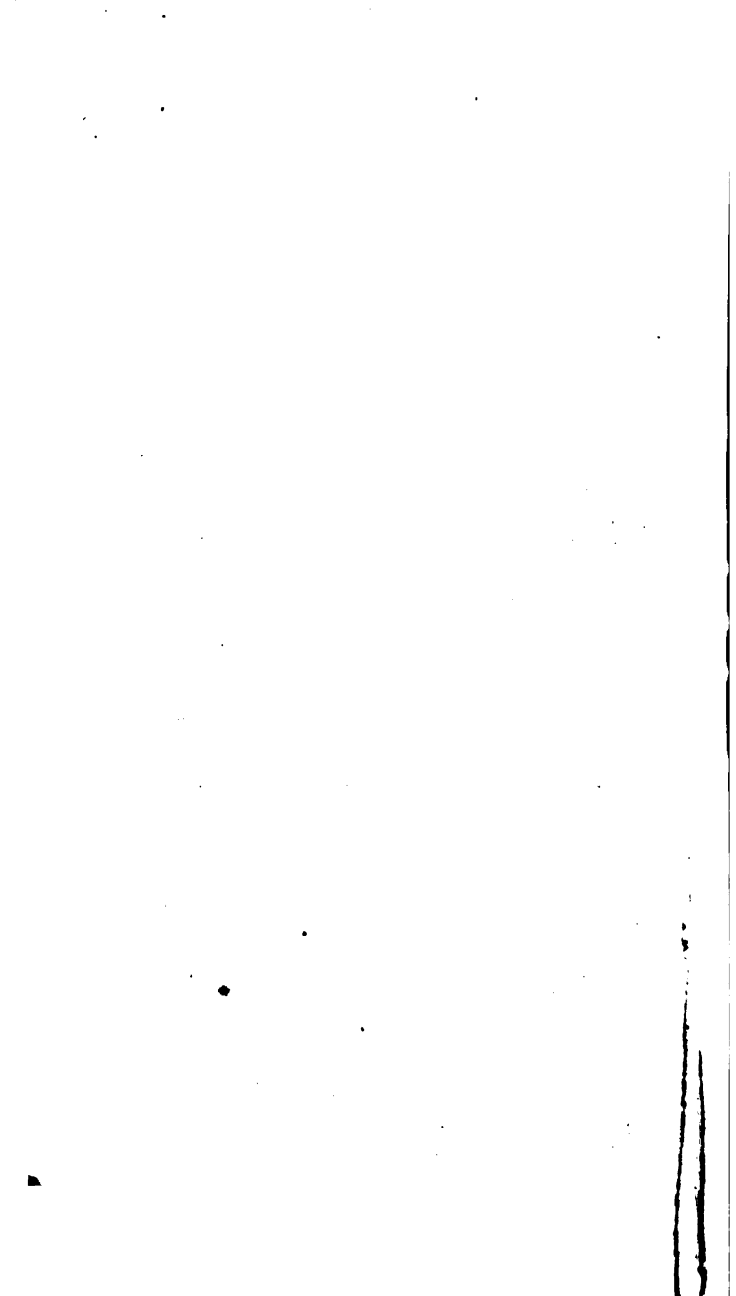
“Me, who never listened to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne’er appal.”—BEATTIE.

Eyam, June, 1842,

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
TITLE PAGE	1
Dedication	3
Preface	5
Contents	7
Subscribers	9
Description of Eyam	13
Dissertation on its Name	16
Antiquities	24
Manor	36
Plague	40
Its Nature and Origin	42
Its communication to Eyam	47
Death of the first Victim	50
Mompesson's Children sent away	56
The Cordon Sanitaire	60
Cucklet Church	62
Affecting Death of Mrs. Mompesson	69
Mompesson's Letter to his Children	71
Do. do. Sir George Saville	74
Do. do. J. Beilby, Esq.	81
Traditions of the Plague	82
Riley Graves	93
The Name and Date of the death of every victim	113
The Church	117
The Church-yard	123
The Rectors	127
The Mines	134
Minstrels	140
Families of Distinction	149
Eccentric Characters	151
Introduction of Methodism	153
Benefactors of Eyam	154
Mansions and Occupants	155
The Dale, &c.	158



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PAGE 20th—4th line from bottom,	for <i>battled</i> read <i>brattled</i> .
— 40th—13th do.	for <i>prescribed</i> read <i>prescribed</i> .
— 44th—15th do.	for <i>affected</i> read <i>infected</i> .
— 52d—9th do.	do. do.
— 67th—17th line from top	for <i>cut</i> read <i>rock</i> .
— 69th—16th do.	for <i>convalescency</i> read <i>to conva-</i> <i>lescence</i> .
— 81st—16th do.	for <i>Mompesson's</i> read <i>Mompesson</i> .
— 124th—5th do.	for <i>Sepulchre</i> read <i>Sepulture</i> .

THE
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES
OF
EYAM.

“ Around the precincts of my tranquil home,
I *know* each barren spot, each cultured nook.”

J. C. PRINCE.

“ Lovely village! afar thy name is spread
Throughout this land. Alas! 'tis not alone
By rural charms that pilgrims here are led :—
They come to gaze upon each field-gravestone
That tells what thou lone village once hast known :—
When pestilence with direful, black'ning breath,
With a dread fury raged till then unknown,
And sudden swept, as each memorial saith,
The trembling village throng into the arms of death.”

W. W.

THE village of Eyam has been long characterized throughout the Peak of Derbyshire, as the birth-place of genius—the seat of the Muses—the Athens of the Peak, and the like. That it is justly entitled to these classical encomiums, I shall not presume to affirm. Certain it is, however, that the once renowned Nightbroder, Miss Anna

Seward, Richard Furniss, and other inferior minstrels were born at Eyam; and equally certain it is, that while residing at Eyam the highly-gifted, but unfortunate Cunningham, tuned his harmonious, sylvan shell, and sang his happiest lays. But hallowed as is this romantic village by giving birth and residence to these celebrated characters, it has, however, another and a stronger claim to general notice—the terrible PLAGUE by which it was so singularly visited, and almost wholly depopulated, in the years A.D. 1665 and 1666: the details of which calamity must, however, necessarily follow a brief description of the location, scenery, antiquities, and Manor, of this highly interesting village.

Eyam is a village and parish in the North or High Peak of Derbyshire. It is comprised in the Hundred of the High Peak,—in the Honours of Peveril and Tutbury;—and in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Archdeaconry of Derby, and in the Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry. The village stands in the south-east part of the parish, six miles north of Bakewell, and nearly in the centre of a line drawn from Sheffield to Buxton; being twelve miles distant from each place. It contains about 180 houses, and according to the census of 1841, 954 inhabitants; who are chiefly employed in agriculture, lead mining, and cotton and silk weaving. The parish is nearly circular, about four miles in diameter, and includes the hamlets of Foolow and Eyam Woodlands. It abuts on the parishes of Hope, Hathersage, and Bakewell; and the following places and streams mark its boundary:—a rivulet near to Stoney Middleton Church-yard—top of Stoke-wood—Goatcliffe brook—the river Derwent—Highlow brook

—top of Grindlow—Wardlow Miers—Foundley-fence—and the Dale Brook to where it receives the rivulet first mentioned. Small as is this parish, yet it contained an uncommon tract of moorland until the year A.D. 1801, when an Act was obtained for its inclosure : a circumstance which has, by the bulk of the parishioners, been greatly regretted. The village forms a long street, nearly a mile in length, built apparently, as it is approached from Middleton Dale, on a ledge or table-land of limestone. The stratum of this stone seems wholly composed of marine exuviae, abounding with a variety of shells: entronchi, coralloids, madrapores, and many other species of crustaceous animals. In this stratum of limestone the greatest caverns abound:—in fact, Eyam is built on a series of caverns, many of which have been explored to a great extent—chiefly for the beautiful and fanciful stalactites with which they are so richly adorned. The village runs from east to west in a serpentine form ; and, as Gilbert White has observed of Selbourne, the cartway divides two most incongruous soils. The houses, in most places, on the north side, stand just where the grit or sandstone stratum commences ; whilst those on the south side are built invariably on the limestone ; and though the village is so very long, the same diversification occurs throughout.

The several parts of the village are thus named : —the Townend, which is the eastern part, and from which branch the Lydgate, the Water-lane, the Dale, the Cocy or Causeway,—the Cross, or middle of the village,—the Townhead, or the extreme western part. Contiguous to the street, and nearly in the centre of the village, stands the Church, a very ancient fabric, which from its being

encircled by large umbrageous trees, has often excited the notice and admiration of strangers.

Of the origin and signification of the name of this old English village—Eyam—there is but little that is satisfactory known. That this was not the original name of the village is very probable indeed: in fact, there is some mention in some very old work, that its name before the Norman Conquest was *Mosse*, and that in consequence of a battle, fought on the heights a little north of Eyam, the name of the village was changed to something like its present name, in honour of the victorious chief. That there is any good foundation for this matter I cannot say; having, after a very tedious search, been unable to meet with the account. Of the validity of this story the following circumstances may be considered as evidence:—all that plot of land behind the Church at Eyam, known as the *Nar*, or more properly, *Near Crofts*, was once a fenny bog, covered very deeply with moss, which circumstance *might* give the name of *Mosse* to the adjoining habitations; and that a battle was fought on Eyam-moor, in some past age, there is abundant proof in the warlike weapons found there at various times; and also in the very current tradition of that event. It is very singular that this certainly ancient village is not mentioned in the Norman survey by any thing like its present name; and that such is the case, there is every reason to believe; while there is a strong probability that it had a priest and a church long anterior to that period. Stoney Middleton, a village very near Eyam, and of smaller extent, is noticed in the survey of Edward the Confessor, yet its name—Middleton—gives prior existence to Eyam. To notice all the conjectures concerning the intrinsic

meaning of the name—Eyam—would be tiresome even to the etymologist; a few, however, of the most plausible will not, it is hoped, be deemed intrusive and insignificant.

Some imagine that the original meaning of the word has been lost through its having been written so variously at different times. In the reign of Henry the Sixth it was written *Eyham*—in fact, it has had all the following modes of spelling:—*Wyham, Eam, Eyme, Hame, Eme, Hyme, Eyham*, and *Eyam*: the last form only is now generally recognized. A little north of Eyam, there is a small place called *Bretton*, which name is very ancient, and means *mountainous*. The word is pure Celtic, and it was the name of England long before the Roman invasion. This little place, being in the parish of Eyam, and having retained a name of such high antiquity has induced some few to suppose that the word—Eyam—in some of its forms of spelling, may be of the same ancient source; of which word, however, the meaning appears to be (according to this supposition) irrecoverably lost.* One of the two following conjectures, comes most probably the nearest to the true signification.

In the word *Eyam*, we have undoubtedly the *ham*, or *am*, the common Saxon termination expressive of residence; but of what the *Ey* is significant, is not so manifest. One of the conjectures alluded to, states that the *Ey* is a corruption

* Creighton, in his Introduction to his Dictionary of Scripture Names, observes that Dr. Johnson and other modern lexicographers, have greatly erred in seeking (and pretending to find) the origin of western tongues in Greek and Latin. He further states, that a knowledge of the Celtic is indispensable in tracing the true origin of the names of places, rivers, and monuments in the West of Europe.

of the adjective *High* ; and that the original signification of the compound word *Eyam*, was *High-dwelling*, *High-place*, or *High-hamlet* : this, considering the locality of the village, its proximity to Sir William, one of the highest mountains in the Peak, is far from being improbable.* The other conjecture derives the *Ey*, from *Ea*, water, which, with the residential *ham*, or *am*, means a residence amidst, or by a superfluity of water. The great quantity of water with which Eyam must always have been supplied, renders this supposition more than probable. In the centre of the village there is a pool vulgarly called the river, which name is a corruption of *Eaver*, or *Ever-water* : an appellation properly descriptive of this pool, which with the numberless springs and rivulets in and around the village, give a strong probability that the word —Eyam—may signify the *Water-place*, or *The Village of Waters*.† According to tradition, and other evidences, the village once stood in what is called Eyam-edge ; and this is strongly countenanced by the fact, that where the greater part of the village now stands, was once covered with the works of lead mines ; and to such an extent, that it is very common for old openings, or shafts, to fall in under the thresholds, pantries, and floors of the houses, and under the street and other places where none was known to the inhabitants to exist. In the Edge, traces of the foundations of habitations have frequently been discovered. This circumstance has been mentioned as a probable cause for some change in the name of the village. In fine, it may be observed of this vague and unsatisfactory subject, that whatever may be the signifi-

* Vide, *Genius of the Peak*, page 116.

† Vide, *Medicus Magus*, page 58.

cation of the name of the village; that whether it has changed its name or not; it has now a name which the poet wished that to be of an old English village which he met with, namely: "no common name":—

"Thy name I know not nor would know,—
No common name would I be told;
Yet often shall I seek thee now,—
Thou village quaint and old."—R. HOWITT.

The scenery of Eyam has but few parallels: it is highly varied and picturesque. In the eastern part of the village the cottages are generally mantled with ivy, adorned with fruit trees, and shaded by wide-spreading sycamores. In some parts the cottages are grotesquely clustered together; in other parts they stand apart, flanked with beehives, and with their eaves of straw bestudded with nests of the household sparrow; altogether forming a scene, delightful as rare. This rural and highly romantic picture is greatly heightened by the grey tower of the Church, which picturesquely overtops this part of the village, rising from the centre of a beautiful circle of linden trees, which encompass the Church-yard like giant sentinels, guarding the sacred precincts of the silent dead. Amidst these homely cottages there are some mansions of excellent structure, which for elegance and number far excel those of any other village in Derbyshire.

Northward of the village, a mountain range, nearly 600 feet high, runs parallel with the village, crowned with plantations of rising trees. This lofty range is to the village an impenetrable screen, to ward off the biting, boreal blasts: the village lying, as it were, beneath its sheltering height, in peaceful, calm repose. How beautiful the pros-

pect from this lofty eminence. Thence the eye may behold—

“ — ancient hamlets nestling far below,
And many a wild wood walk, where childhood's footsteps go.”
J. C. PRINCE.

A little farther north, nearly in the centre of the parish, rises Sir William—the Parnassus of the Peak; a mountain of great altitude, and honoured by numberless classical associations. From the summit of this Prince of Derbyshire hills, the eye extends over countless hills and luxuriant dales. Masson, Ax-edge, Mam Tor, Kinderscout, and Stanage lift up their hoary heads and, beckoning to Sir William, tell in language stronger than words, of a companionship of ages. How rapturous must be the feelings of the tourist who mounts the peak of this mountain, and with fire-kindled eye beholds on every hand the uneffaced handmarks of Nature! How joyous his sensations to perceive in such goodly profusion, the perceptible and original traces of the finger of God! Beautiful mountain! ever shall I remember standing on thy summit at the decline of a hot summer's day; the sinking sun tinged with gold the peaks of far distant hills, which shone severally in the distance like well remembered joys in the memory of the past. But anon, this lovely scene was changed: I beheld the clouds, old couriers of the sky, marshalling the elements to war; the distant mountains put on their misty robes, as if conscious of the impending storm. Soon I saw the vivid lightning flash; the thunder battled in the rear; and in the midst of this sublime scene I almost unconsciously repeated the following exquisite lines of Byron, changing without premeditation the words “Jura,”

and "joyous Alps," to "Mam Tor," and "Sir William high"—

"————— Far along
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And *Mam Tor* answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to *Sir William* high, who calls to her aloud."

Drenched with rain, I gazed with profound emotion on the elemental strife; and in the calm which ensued I heard "the small still voice," with the awe and reverence of the Patriarch of old.

"—— God curbs the lightning, stills the roar,
And earth smiles through her tears more lovely than before."
J. C. PRINCE.

A little to the east of Eyam is Riley, or the Hill of Graves—a noble and pleasing feature in the romantic character of the village. Rising on high, with its steepy, wood-clad slope, it gives to the village a richly picturesque appearance. The varied and indescribable scenery in this direction is bounded on one hand by the sable rocks of Corbor, and the singularly built village of Stoney Middleton, a great part of which forms a portion of the parish of Eyam.

On the south side of the village two dells branch parallel with each other into Middleton Dale. One, provincially called the Delf, or Delve, is a most secluded and beautiful place. It has all the natural beauty and seclusion of the valley of Rasselas. Hanging tors, pensile cliffs, Cucklet church, shadowy trees, blooming flowers, a winding rill, tuneful birds, are only a few of the rural charms of this incomparable dell. At the western extremity of this lonely retreat is an extensive chasm, or cleft, known by the undignified appellation,—Salt Pan; it extends throughout the whole mass

of limestone rock, and the projections on the one side, and indentations on the other, fully indicate that this vast mass of rock was rent asunder by some mighty convulsion of nature in some distant age of the world. A small stream issues from the mouth of the chasm, and winds its way amongst beds of moss, fern, and flowers. Often have I sat musing over the purling stream in the chasm, until I fancied myself in the Egerian Grotto. Ah!

“ This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamoured Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy love—the earliest oracle.”—BYRON.

The other dell, known as Eyam Dale, is rich in rural scenery. On one side it is bounded by grey towering rocks, crested with ivy and other foliage. Some few of these rocks, however, are naked, exhibiting a sort of grimness that forms a pleasing contrast. The other side of this dell is covered with rising wood, amongst which there are numerous winding paths, that lead to a place called “the Rock Garden,” where for ages the lovers of Eyam have breathed “the tender tale.” A dancing rill winds through the dell, murmuring most musically to the lonely ear. This dell, and in fact the whole village, may be said to be another Anathoth—a place of responses, or echoes. In several approximate places a clear pollysyllabical echo exists. Such is a portion of the very imperfectly described scenery of this secluded village; which has frequently been noticed to be the best specimen of an old English village now to be met with.

Throughout the whole of this parish are scattered many elegant and substantial dwellings—some for situation and elegance are rarely to be met with at so great a distance from places of commerce. Amongst the latter description is

Leam Hall, the residence of M. M. Middleton, Esq., an old English gentleman, alike distinguished for urbanity, good sense, and literary taste.* This singularly neat villa stands in the midst of ornamented grounds ; and when contrasted with the mountain scenery in the circling distance, it has all the charms of an oasis in a desert. The exterior decorations of this rural seat have often excited the admiration of tourists. Stoke Hall, a little out of the parish, is another of this class of buildings. Still nearer the verge of the parish, in Stoney Middleton, is the much admired country seat of Lord Chief Justice Denman, — whose richly entitled fame as a lawyer and judge ; and whose poetical taste, as evinced in his translation of the famous song on Harmodius and Aristogiton,† render this place of his occasional residence greatly attractive. Many other well-built habitations may be seen in all places throughout the parish — in Foolow, Hazleford, Stoney Middleton, and Grindleford Bridge ; besides solitary farm houses on the hills and in the valleys of this locality, which is justly characterised in the following language of the poet :—

“ A realm of mountain, forest-haunt, and fell,
 And fertile valleys, beautifully lone ;
 Where fresh and far romantic waters roam,
 Singing a song of peace by many a cottage home.”

J. C. PRINCE.

The varied and romantic scenery of this place, as may be expected, has distinguished the inhabitants by a character peculiarly antique. Before the present century the villagers of Eyam exhibited all the characteristics so observable in the inhabi-

* M. M. Middleton, Esq. is the author of a work entitled “ Poetical Sketches of a Tour,”—written for private circulation.

† Vide Bland’s Anthology.

tants of mountainous districts. Even now a notion prevails of keeping themselves distinct by inter-marriages. They are exceedingly tenacious of the preservation of their genealogies,—a consequence of having dwelt in one place for successive generations. Hence their observance of customs from time immemorial; hence their adherence to hereditary prejudices; hence their numerous legends, handed down from time immemorial; and hence that unity of interest for which they have been so singularly distinguished in times past. It is lamentable, however, that the physical condition of the present inhabitants of this far-famed village is greatly inferior to that of their forefathers: the principal cause of which is the decay of the lead mines. Previously to the present century, each miner had his cow and small plot of land, to which he attended during the intervals of his work at the mine; this double employment yielded him sufficient to live in health and happiness, leaving him abundance of time for halesome recreation. The mines being under water, can no longer in their present condition be successfully worked: and this deplorable circumstance is fast changing the aspect and character of the village. It, however, still retains a few of the endearing marks of the old English village: a few old pastimes fondly kept; a smattering of happy harvest scenes; and the holy welcome of the Sabbath morn. These still remain to call up a thousand recollections of once happier times: when sweet content and plenty dwelled within the rustic cot.

The ANTIQUITIES of Eyam are not very numerous, but interesting. Those of nature are remarkable. About twenty years ago, Mr. Anthony Hancock, of Foolow, found in a limestone quarry,

near Eyam, a petrified snake coiled up in a ring, very perfect. It went into the collection of some eminent antiquarian, where it will, probably, be treasured as a very singular curiosity. Of this once living animal, it may be observed, that, while the mortal part of hundreds of generations has returned to its pristine elements, this reptile has retained its identical form through the lapse of unnumbered ages. A little more than thirty years ago, Mr. James Wood, Eyam, was engaged in cutting a large sandstone on Eyam-moor, when, to his utter surprise and astonishment, he found imbedded in the stone a petrified fish about a foot in length. It was perfect in every part—gill and tail. This phenomenon tends to disturb some geological theories.

But it is the Druidical remains, a little north of Eyam, which excite the liveliest interest in antiquarians; which remains prove, to a certain degree, the high antiquity of Eyam. All that tract of land called Eyam-moor, was, until its inclosure, literally covered with these relics of ante-historic times. The Druidical temple, or circle, on that part of the moor called Wet-withins, is frequently visited. It consists of sixteen oblong sandstones, standing in an upright position, forming a circle about thirty yards in diameter. The stones are nearly equal in size, standing about a yard high, except on the north side, where two or three are enveloped in heath, and therefore appear, though clearly visible, not so large as the others. This circle is still further distinguished by a circular mound of earth, about three feet high, in which the stones are placed. In the centre, there stood, until some years back, a large stone, which was, undoubtedly, the altar on which human sacrifices were made.

It was also the *Maen Gorsedd* (or stone of Assembly.) The ceremony used at the opening of the *Gorseddau* (or meetings) was the sheathing of the sword on the *Maen Gersedd*, at which all the Druid priests assisted. All the places of meeting were, like this, set apart by forming a circle of earth and stones around the *Maen Gorsedd*. This circle was called *Cylch Cyngrair*, or circle of Federation; and the priest, or bard, who recited the traditions and poems, was named the *Dudgeiniad*, or the Reciter. The *Dudgeiniad*, dressed in a uni-coloured robe, always commenced his recitations by one of the following mottoes :—“ In the eye of the light, and in the face of the sun ;”—“ The truth against the world.” It is singular that this circle has not been more noticed, seeing that it is far more perfect than many, more particularly described.

How deeply impressed with sensations of veneration must be the contemplative mind, when he stands within this circle, which has been, some thousands of years ago, the theatre on which the ancient Briton displayed his knowledge, patriotism, and eloquence. This veneration, however, is diminished when we reflect on some of the bloody and unholy sacrifices said to have been made by the Druids.

Let us for a few moments fly back on the wings of thought, through the dim vista of two thousand years; let us imagine ourselves standing near this very spot, looking at the mysterious and bloody rites of the Druids. Behold within this very circle a lovely female is laid upon the central bloody stone; trembling with horror at the awful scene around her. About the place a countless throng look on with profound emotion, watching the victim

with anxious solicitude. The fire on the altar burns dimly; noisy and discordant music incessantly plays to drown the victim's cries. All is now hushed, and the white-robed priest, with an infernal joy, approaches his shivering victim, brandishing his knife; and oh! horrible! plunges it into her heaving bosom; and in an instant tears out her reeking heart and casts it into the fire. Terrific scene! Let us return to this our day, and rejoice in the utter abolishment of the sacrifice of human beings.

In the immediate vicinity of this circle there are at least twelve more, each surrounded with circular mounds of earth, and some with stones. Most of these, as they are not above twelve yards in diameter, must be sepulchral; this is evident, for there appears to have been in all of them, a large heap of stones in the centre; under which stones, urns have been buried, but are now taken away.*

Contiguous to the large circle, or temple, there was, until some years back, one of the most interesting barrows in the Peak of Derbyshire. It covered an area of ground from twenty-five to thirty yards in diameter. It was in the form of a cone, ten or twelve yards high, when perfect; and was composed wholly of small stones. On opening this cairn, or barrow, a many years ago, an unbaked urn was found containing ashes, bones, an arrow-head of flint, and a little charcoal with which the body had been burned. The person interred in this cairn was certainly some great chief or king; for according to some authors, it was the custom of the aboriginals of this Island, to express their abhorrence of a tyrant or other wicked person

* Vide Brown, on Urn Burial.

after death, by casting a stone at the place of his sepulture as often as they passed it; and thus were accumulated the large piles of stones, under which urns, containing ashes and bones, have been found. In the Highlands of Scotland, it is common to this day, to say contemptuously, "I shall cast a stone at thy grave some day." There is, in the neighbourhood of Eyam, a very popular tradition of some great chief, or king, having been buried in this barrow; and it has been frequently explored in search of something appertaining to him. Nothing, however, has ever been found except the urn; but in the vicinity, spears, arrow-heads, axes, hatchets, and a many other remains of antiquity have been turned up. About a mile west of this barrow there was, about forty years ago, another of great dimensions: it stood on Hawley's piece. The diameter at the base was twenty-two yards, and about twelve yards high. When the Moor was enclosed, it was carried away to make fences. An urn of great size was found near the centre on the ground, and was carried away to the residence of the person who found it; but was afterwards broken and buried.* Another barrow unexplored may be seen in Eyam-edge, near the Old Twelve-meer's mine. It is about forty yards in diameter at the base, and about eight or ten yards high. In the top there is a dimple or cavity, which, according to Pilkington, is a manifest proof that it is British. Dr. Borlace, however, thinks that such are Roman; but in this, I imagine, he is mistaken.

* The person who had this precious relic of antiquity, was persuaded by his silly neighbours, that it was unlucky to have such a thing in his house; and on losing a young cow, he immediately buried it.

Indeed the whole parish north of the village, is even now bestudded with barrows, cairns, mounds, and other remains of antiquity.

One large stone on the Moor has been a great object of curiosity, from its having a circular cavity in the top about a foot in diameter, and the same in depth. The stone is of an extraordinary size—by far the largest on the Moor. It is conjectured to have been the altar, or central stone of some large circle, but of which there is no trace now. That this place was one of the principal places of the Druids there are numberless proofs; but as it is out of the road to any place of note, it has been rarely noticed.

Numberless urns have been found at various times around Eyam. About forty years ago, in making the road called the Occupation Road, a beautiful urn, richly decorated, was found by Mr. S. Furness, Eyam; it contained nothing but ashes. Around the place where the urn was found, the earth appeared to have been burnt, which circumstance, according to Wormius, would lead us to believe it to be Danish. This author states, in his funeral ceremonies of the Danes, that "The deceased was brought out into the fields, where they made an oblong place with great stones, and there burned the body, and then collected the ashes into an urn, round which they set great stones; casting up over it a mound of earth and stones." Respectable as is this authority, it is nevertheless doubtful, as will be seen from the following contents of an urn found within a few yards of this.

Not many years ago, two men, Joseph Slinn and William Redfearn, were working near the Bole-hill, Eyam, when they discovered an urn surrounded with stones. Slinn wishing to procure it

entire, went to a distance for a spade; in the meanwhile, Redfearn, thinking it might contain some treasure, immediately dashed it to pieces, when, to his utter mortification, he found it contained only some ashes and two copper coins. One of the coins was lost on the spot, but was found some years after, when I saw it, and found it to contain the inscription, *Maximianus*, and something else not legible: probably Dioclesian, as Maximianus and Dioclesian were joint Emperors of the Roman Empire.* As these two urns were very similar, and buried so near together, it is highly probable that they were Roman; at least, containing Roman coin implies as much. Another urn was found in the Mag-clough, Eyam,—a very large one: this was buried again afterwards. Robert Broomhead, Eyam, broke one to pieces in taking the foundation of an old wall up, at Riley, about fourteen years ago. One was found forty years since in Riley-side, in which was some ancient weapons and arrow-heads of flint. Two cairns or borrows were destroyed on the top of Riley, a many years since, in which were found urns containing ashes and bones. There is also some recollection of a very large circle of stones, or very high, unhewn pillars, near to those barrows, which stones were surrounded by a circular mound of earth. The circle had an entrance, if not two, something like that mentioned by Dr. Stukeley, at

* Maximianus (M. Arul. Valer. Hercul.) born in Sirmium. He entered early into the Roman army, and exhibited so much valour, that the Emperor Dioclesian, in A.D. 286, shared the Empire with him. The cruelty of Maximianus towards the Christians is almost incredible. During his short career 144,000 were put to death, and 700,000 banished. He quitted the Empire with Dioclesian, and hanged himself at Marseilles in A.D., 310.—BAYLE.

Abury, North Wiltshire. This celebrated antiquarian makes the Druidical remains at Abury, to have been in a form, symbolical of the serpent; and it is matter of regret, that he had not his attention directed to the numerous druidical remains at Eyam, for in his time they were certainly more perfect.* As, from what is already shewn, the Druids abounded so greatly, and had numberless temples around Eyam, it is natural to suppose that there would be some traces of their customs still observed. That such is the case there is ample evidence.

One of the incantations practised at the festival of the Druids was to anoint the forehead of a sick person with May-dew, which was carefully gathered at day-break, and the cure of course immediately followed. Now at Eyam and its vicinity it has been a general, and still prevailing custom to anoint weak and deceased children with May-dew. Another part of the ceremony of the great festival of the Druids, consisted in carrying long poles of mountain ash festooned with flowers. Hanging out bunches of flowers from cottage windows, so very prevalent at Eyam on May-day, has its origin in this Druidical ceremony. In fact, to notice all the customs of similar origin, and still observed at Eyam, would be tedious:—Passing the bottle or glass, (*deas soil*,) or according to the course of the sun; diving for apples in vessels of water; making love-cakes, or speechless cakes; carrying garlands before the corpees of unmarried persons; giving cakes and singing at funerals, and numerous other observances, have a purely Druidical origin.

* Some persons imagine to have seen the remains of a large funeral pyre, near the Shaw-engine, Eyam-edge. To this I cannot speak.

Gebelin and Brande have both noticed a peculiar custom practiced in Cornwall, and particularly at Penzance, the origin of which they say is lost in antiquity. The same custom is known and practiced at Eyam, in the very common plays—Loosing-tines and Long-duck. In reading an account of the antiquities of Cornwall, I was particularly struck with the identity of the two customs. The Golf, or Golfing, is said to be an amusement peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland, where it has been practiced from time immemorial. The same diversion is known at Eyam, by the uncouth name—*Seg*. Goose-riding, about half a century since, was at Eyam a very common, but barbarous amusement. The hopper-baulk; bees knitting on a dead branch, are considered to be certain prognostications of death. The Druidical customs and other observances may be deemed trifling and unimportant; but there was something of weight connected with the origin of each; at least they prove, to some degree, the great antiquity of the place where they are still observed.

That Eyam is a very ancient place may be still further ascertained. The word "Tor" is said to be of Phœnician origin, and this word is very common at Eyam:—The Tor Tops, the Shining Tor, the Hanging Tor, are all in its immediate vicinity. Bole, a word equally common, signified anciently the hearth on which the lead was melted: the boles were made on the western brows of Tors. Bole is an eastern word, which means a lump of metal. These, with numerous other words, can be clearly traced to an Asiatic source, which is a demonstrative proof that the mines in and around Eyam, were worked anciently either by a colony of foreigners, or under their direction. We are

certain that the mines of the Peak were worked in very early times ; some think before the Roman invasion ; certainly, however, by the Romans, or their enslaved Britons. It is unnecessary to refer to the several pieces of lead found near Matlock, bearing the inscriptions of Roman Emperors. On Eyam-moor, small pieces of lead have been found in every direction : one weighing fourteen pounds was met with beneath the surface very lately ; and about thirty years since, in planting some ground near to Leam Hall, belonging to M. M. Middleton, Esq., a conical piece of lead was found, weighing between thirty and forty pounds. It was a yard in length, and had a hook or handle attached to it, whereby it had been disengaged from the mould in which it was cast.

That the Romans had, at least, a temporary residence in or around Eyam, we have satisfactory evidence in the finding of Roman coins and other articles. In the year A.D. 1814, some persons employed in baring limestone in Eyam Dale, found a great quantity of Roman coins, some silver and some copper, bearing the inscriptions of Probus, Gallienus, Victorinus,—Roman Emperors. These coins were in the possession of T. Birds, Esq., Eyam, a highly celebrated antiquarian. About sixty years ago, a copper coin was found on Eyam-moor, bearing the inscription of Probus ; and near twenty years since, a Roman copper coin was found in the Dale, Eyam, with the inscription on one side, Divo Claudius, or God Claudius ; on the obverse, Consecratia, or Consecration with the Eagle ; it is now in the possession of Mr. J. Slinn, Eyam. In that part of Stoney Middleton, in Eyam parish, there have been Roman coins, at various times discovered ; and a place called the Castle Hill,

bears evident traces of the mighty masters of the world. Some spears, and various other weapons, have been found at Ryley, Eyam, under a large stone: they were nearly corroded away.

That the descendants of the Romans continued to reside in and around Eyam, may be conjectured from the language of the inhabitants. *Plaust*, from *Plaustrum*, to plaust hay or corn, for the eating of those articles; and *sord*, from *sordes*, the rind of bacon, and other things. I know a many unlettered persons who invariably use *quantum* for quantity, and many other Latin words. There was a word very commonly used at Eyam, some time ago, but whence derived I am not aware. *Steven*, to steven a coat: to order a coat. Rhodes says that he has somewhere read that the Romans erected elegant mansions among the Peak Hills. And it is believed that the Romans continued to reside amongst the mountains around Eyam, even when the Saxons and Danes successively possessed the surrounding plains. Roman remains have been found in abundance in a many places in the neighbourhood of Eyam, Stoney Middleton, Brough, and other villages. Indeed, it has almost been satisfactorily proved that the sixth legion remained in Derbyshire sometime before they marched to the North; but there are only a few traces of the works left, in which their taste and genius were exhibited. Thus, then, there are some grounds for indulging in the pleasing supposition that the place where Eyam stands, at least, has been honoured and hallowed by the presence of the mighty conquerors of the earth.

That the Saxons penetrated among the mountains of the Peak, and resided in and around Eyam, numerous proofs might be adduced. Al-

most every little eminence has a Saxon name, or termination of name :—Hay-cliffe, Shining-cliffe, Goats-cliffe, and a very many others, too numerous to mention. The following customs are of Saxon origin :—

Lich is a Saxon word, signifying a dead body. The principal gate into Eyam church-yard is to this day called Lich-gate, or, vulgarly, Light-gate. This is the invariable designation of the gate of the church-yard through which the funerals pass ; and this appellation proves, to some degree, the antiquity of the church and village. The principal gate of Duddleston church-yard, Shropshire, is called by the inhabitants “the Lich-gate,” and Duddleston has been particularly noticed for its antiquity. Lich-waking, sitting with the dead both night and day, is still practiced by the old and wealthy families of Eyam.—The cross at Eyam is said to be of Saxon or Danish origin. Another once stood in Eyam-edge, and one at Cross-lowe, Eyam ; both have been destroyed. That in the church-yard (and of which I shall say more subsequently) once stood in that part of Eyam, called “The Cross.”

Another very ancient custom was observed at Eyam, until within a century back. The principal road into Eyam once, was the Lyd-gate, now called Ligget. Lyd, or Lid, is a Saxon word, which means to cover or protect. At this entrance into Eyam, there was a strong gate, at which “watch and wards were kept every night.” Every effective man who was a householder in the village, was bound to stand in succession at this gate, from nine o'clock at night to six in the morning, to question any person who might appear at the gate wishing for entrance into the village, and to give

alarm if danger were apprehended. The watch had a large wooden halbert, or "watch-bill," for protection, and when he came off watch in the morning, he took the "watch-bill," and reared it against the door of that person whose turn to watch succeeded his; and so on in succession. No village in England has retained and practiced a custom so ancient, to so late a period. In the Scriptures there are numberless allusions to this very antique custom: as in Joshua, c. 2, v. 5, "And it came to pass about the time of shutting the gate," and so on. Indeed the following distich may justly be applied to Eyam:—

"Here Antiquity enjoys,
A deep and mossy sleep."—R. HOWITT.

The MANOR of Eyam is not very extensive: it is about the same as the parish. It cannot be correctly ascertained to whom it belonged previously to the Norman conquest; but most probably to Elsi, a powerful and wealthy Saxon nobleman. After the battle of Hastings it was given, along with seven other Derbyshire Manors, and those of Sheffield, Worksop, and a many others, to Roger de Busli, a trusty officer to William the Conqueror. Much of the property of De Busli, was held by his man Roger, as feudal tenant, who was succeeded, in the reign of Henry the First, by William de Lovetot. Matilda, the great granddaughter of this William de Lovetot, and sole heiress of the Lovetots, married, in the reign of Richard the First, Gerard de Furnival: and we find that Thomas, the son of Matilda and Gerard de Furnival, in enumerating his manors, at the instance of the Statute Quo Warranto, in the reign of Edward the First, mentions himself as possessing Eyam. Joan

the heiress of the Furnivals, was married to Thomas Nevill. The property of the Nevills passed by marriage to the Talbots, who became on that account Barons of Furnival, afterwards Earls of Shrewsbury. On the death of George, the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, Eyam became the property of Sir George Saville, who had married Mary, his daughter,—she was sister to the last Earl of Shrewsbury. It remained in the Saville family until the death of William Saville, second Marquis of Halifax, in the year A.D. 1700; who left three daughters, his co-heiresses, amongst whom, after their marriage, the estates of the Savilles were divided, by a partition deed in the sixteenth year of George the Second. Of these three co-heiresses, Anne married Charles Lord Bruce, son and heir of Thomas, Earl of Ailesbury; Dorothy married Richard, Earl of Burlington; and Mary married Sackville, Earl of Thanet. It is generally supposed, that it was in consequence of the very rich veins of lead ore, discovered at Eyam about the beginning of the eighteenth century, that these noblemen agreed to hold the Manor of Eyam jointly, and to present a Rector to the living (of which they had the gift) by turns.

The joint portion of the Manor belonging to Lord Bruce, became, through marriage, or otherwise, the property of the Duke of Chandos, from whom it passed by marriage to the Duke of Buckingham; the joint portion belonging to the Earl of Burlington, became, through marriage, the property of the Devonshire family; and the other joint portion has remained, up to the present, in the family of the Earl of Thanet. Thus, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Earl of Thanet are the present Lords of

the Manor of Eyam. Besides the manorial rights, and the gift of the living, the Lords of the Manor have little or no property in Eyam—most of the land and other property having been sold by Sir George Saville two centuries ago.

It may be well to notice in this place a few popular errors connected with the Manor of Eyam, which have crept into works of otherwise very high merit. Rhodes states, through misinformation, that the Eyam estate descended from King John, to a family of the name of Stafford, on whom it was bestowed in consideration of certain military services, and on the express condition, "that a lamp should be kept perpetually burning before the altar of St. Helen, in the parish church of Eyam." That the Staffords of Eyam, an exceedingly ancient and wealthy family, held a great portion of the land at Eyam on the tenure mentioned, is probably correct; but that it emanated from the munificence of King John, is an undoubted mistake. King John, when Earl of Montaine, had all the confiscated estates of the Peverils granted to him by his brother, Richard the First; but Eyam, and other places in Derbyshire, never formed a part of the princely possessions of the Peverils; although Camden mentions the whole of the county of Derby as belonging to that family. The document containing the specification of the grant of lands at Eyam to the Staffords, is said to have been found at the Highlow Hall, near Eyam, a many years since; but in whose hands it now lies, is not publicly known. A person, however, who saw the document at the time of its removal from the Highlow, states, that the grant was made, not by King John, but by some Roger: probably Roger, the feudal tenant of De Busli, or Roger

De Busli himself. It is conjectured by some, notwithstanding the probable genuineness of the document in question, that the Staffords inherited their extensive property at Eyam, by a marriage with the Furnivals: this is countenanced by the arms of the Furnivals being, a bend between six martlets; and the Staffords, a chevron between three martlets. The Staffords were a very wealthy family, but never, as is stated in the Peak Scenery, Lords of the Manor of Eyam.

In the reign of Richard the Second, one of the Staffords of Eyam was, for some political offence, seized in his house at Eyam, and carried away to some place of security, where he remained a close prisoner, until he was ransomed by his relatives and friends. Amongst the conservators of the peace in the county of Derby, made in the twelfth year of the reign of Henry the Sixth. A.D. 1433, we find the names of the following persons:—"John Stafford de Eyham, Richard Colyn de Eyham."* In the work referred to above, it is stated that a new mansion was erecting for the last of the Staffords who resided at Eyam, at the time of the plague, when the family left the place never to return. This is, however, a great mistake: for Humphrey, the last male of this branch of the Staffords, died at Eyam nearly a century before the plague. Of this family, their property, descendants, and habitation, more will be said subsequently. The remaining particulars of the Manor, with a few other circumstances connected with Eyam, up to the middle of the seventeenth

* This Commission was appointed to tender an oath to the Gentry, for the better observance of the peace both in themselves and retainers.—Vide Glover's History of Derbyshire, vol. 1.

century, will be found under different heads, after the following details of the terrible plague.

“ THE PLAGUE

O'er hills and vales of gold and green,
Passed on, undreaded and unseen :
Foregoing cities, towns, and crowds ;
Gay mansions glittering to the clouds,
Magnificence and wealth,
To reach a humbler, sweeter spot,
The village and the peaceful cot,
The residence of health.”

HOLLAND.

Let all who tread the green fields of Eyam remember, with feelings of awe and veneration, that beneath their feet repose the ashes of those moral heroes, who with a sublime, heroic, and an unparalleled resolution gave up their lives,—yea ! doomed themselves to pestilential death, to save the surrounding country. The immortal victors of Thermopylæ and Marathon, who fought so bravely in liberty's holy cause, have no greater, no stronger, claim to the admiration of succeeding generations, than the humble villagers of Eyam in the year 1666. Their magnanimous self-sacrifice, in confining themselves within a proscribed boundary during the terrible pestilence, is unequalled in the annals of the world. The plague, which would undoubtedly have spread from place to place through the neighbouring counties, and which eventually carried off five-sixths of their number, was, in the following forcible language of a celebrated writer, “ here hemmed in, and, in a dreadful and desolating struggle, destroyed and buried with its victims.” How exalted, the sense of duty ; how glorious the conduct of these children of nature, who, for the salvation of the country, heroically braved the horrors of certain, immediate, and pes-

tilential death. Tread softly, then, on the fields where their ashes are laid; let the wild flowers bloom on their wide-scattered graves. Let the ground round the village be honoured and hallowed; for there,

“ The dead are everywhere !

The mountain side ; the plain ; the woods profound ;

All the lone dells—the fertile and the fair,

Is one vast burial ground.”

MARY HOWITT.

The desolation of Eyam by the plague, in the years 1665 and 1666, (but more particularly in 1666,) has, from the time of its occurrence, always been considered a most singular and remarkable event: the more so as the ravages of the plague, were far more dreadful and fatal at Eyam, according to its then population, than those of any other pestilence hitherto recorded. From the latter end of 1664 to December, 1665, about one-sixth of the population of London fell victims to this appalling pestilence; but at Eyam, five-sixths were carried off in a few months of the summer of 1666, excepting a few who died at the close of 1665. This dreadful scourge at Eyam has no parallel; not even that of the “ Black Death” of the fourteenth century.

Though the mortality of the Metropolis was very great and horrible, yet there the populace were not restrained as to flight; there they could easily obtain medical aid; there neighbour knew not neighbour; there thousands might die without being intimately known to each other. But in Eyam, a little sequestered village, containing about three hundred and fifty stationary inhabitants, the death of every one would be a neighbour, if not a relative. In Eyam, then, the plague was, in the language of Roberts, “ the concentration of all

the more dreadful features of that visitation in London without its palliatives." Indeed, it seems exceeding strange, that Eyam, "a little mountain city, an insulated Zoar," secluded among the Peak mountains, distant from London 150 miles, should have been visited by a pestilential disease, which had scarcely ever occurred only in great and populous cities. It is, however, matter of fact, that this terrible plague was brought from London to Eyam in a box of old clothes and some tailors' patterns of cloth. Before I proceed to give the details of the commencement, progress, and horrible effects of this pestilence at Eyam, I shall take the liberty of noticing a few particulars respecting its cause, nature, symptoms, and whence it originated.

Pestilences in general are, as one writer remarks, a consequence of violent commotions in the earth, and are preceded by earthquakes, droughts, excessive rains, or pestiferous winds. Hecker observes, that at the time of the Black Death, in the fourteenth century, the foundations of the earth were shaken from China to the Atlantic; and that through Europe and Asia the atmosphere, by its baneful influence, endangered both animal and vegetable life. The German Chroniclers inform us, that at this time a thick stinking mist advanced from the east, and spread itself over Italy; and it is stated, that previously to an earthquake, at the same time, a pestiferous wind blew in Cyprus of such a deadly nature, that thousands fell down and expired in great agonies. Hecker further notices, that this is one of the rarest of phenomena, as Naturalists have never been able to discover foreign and pernicious ingredients in the air, almost desolating great portions of the earth, as in A.D. 1348. That the human body is

a far more delicate test than philosophical instruments, the effects of the Egyptian Khamsin and the Italian Sirocco plainly and satisfactorily indicate. The Black Death of the fourteenth century, so called from the black spots or putrid decomposition of the skin, is stated to have carried off in the East 37,000,000 of human beings; and in Europe in proportion to its population. This destructive pestilence is beautifully described by Boccaccio, in the introduction to his "Decameron."

But the most generally presumed efficient cause of contagious diseases, is a change in the proportions of the constituents of the atmosphere, affecting various artificial constituents. Infection and contagion have their origin in animalculæ; and, therefore, their infancy, maturity, and decline. The bubo of the plague is full of them. And Cooper says, "if this opinion be well founded it is no wonder that a chemical examination of the atmosphere cannot detect miasma, which does not depend on the state of the atmosphere." "Is not contagion," says Dr. Dwight, "such a fermentation of an animal body as generates animalculæ, and hence the danger of contact; and is not exemption after affection evidence that the germs in that subject have been exhausted. Sir Richard Phillips remarks, "that contagion is one of those words which, like attraction, suction, bewitching, and the like, mislead and obstruct inquiry." And he further observes, "that the differences concerning contagion among the faculty are intellectual phenomena."

The plague generally manifested itself by the febrile symptoms of shivering, nausea, headache, and delirium. In some these affections were so mild as to be taken for slight indisposition. The

victim in this case generally attended his avocation until a sudden faintness came on, when the maculæ, or plague-spot, the fatal token, would soon appear on his breast, indicative of immediate death. But in most cases the pain and delirium left no room for doubt: on the second or third day buboes, or carbuncles, arose about the groin and elsewhere; and if they could be made to suppurate, recovery was probable, but if they resisted the efforts of nature, and the skill of the physician, death was inevitable.

I may be pardoned for just observing, that even in the plague, the greatest enemy of the human race, there is a capriciousness, or rather something mysterious, which baffles even conjecture.

About the middle of the last century, Aleppo was visited by the plague, and one half of its inhabitants fell victims. The Rev. T. Dawes was then chaplain to the factory at Aleppo; and among many other particulars of the plague, he mentions the following very singular occurrences:—A woman was delivered of an affected child with the plague sores on its body, though the mother had been and was free from the distemper. Another woman that suckled her own child of five months old, was seized by the plague and died shortly after; but the child, though it suckled her, and lay in the same bed during her whole disorder, escaped the infection. And another woman, upwards of a hundred years old, was attacked with the plague, and recovered; but her two grandchildren of ten and sixteen years of age, received the infection from her, and both died.

Vinc. Fabricius relates, that when the plague raged in Holland, in 1636, a young girl was seized with it, had three buboes, and was removed to a garden, where her lover, who was betrothed to her,

attended her as a nurse, and slept with her as his wife. He remained uninfected, and she (his beautiful *Ægle*) recovered, and was married to him—

“ her plighted swain,
Soothes with soft kiss, with tender accents charms,
And clasps the bright infection in his arms.”—DARWIN.

The following notices may be justly deemed corroborative of the fact, that the plague was communicated from London to Eyam, in a box of tailors' patterns of cloth. Mr. Williams, Chaplain to Sir R. Suffon, formerly Ambassador at Constantinople, relates that the jacket of a jannisary, who had died of the plague, caused the death of six more, who wore it in succession, before it was ordered to be burned. Alexander Benedictus mentions a feather bed, which proved mortal to numbers on account of its being infected. Theodore Mageire, in a paper laid before the King in Council, at Paris, 1651, says, “ that some bandages of an infected person having been put between a wainscot and wall of a house in Paris, gave the plague, a many years after, to a person who took them out, and it spread immediately through the city.” Another writer observes, “ that contagious matter lodges most in goods of a loose texture, which, being packed up and carried to other countries, let out when opened the imprisoned seeds of infection.” At Florence, in 1348, two hogs were seized with convulsions, and died in less than an hour, through snuffing on some rags which had been thrown into the street from a poor man who had died of the plague. Forrester states that seven children died by playing on clothes brought from an infected house in Zealand to Alkmull, North Holland. Thus, then, with what wisdom and propriety, as we shall see subse-

quently, did Mompesson and the few survivors of the plague at Eyam, burn almost every article of clothing and furniture found in the village.

As to the sources of the plague there are different opinions. The general opinion is, that it is propagated by contagion from the East. Pliny insists that it is an African fever, bred in Ethiopia or Egypt; and that it travels from South to North, but more particularly West. Some maintain that it is common to Europe, especially the South. It is most probable, however, that there are different kinds of epidemic diseases; or rather the plague assumes different forms and aspects in different countries and climates. The "Black Death" was attended by expectoration of blood, the lungs being attacked with carbuncular inflammation, which must have added greatly to the fatality of the other symptoms. After its first fury was spent, it assumed the usual form of the plague: hemorrhage being no longer an attendant symptom. It was in this form that it was brought by some ships from Cyprus or Candia in the Levant, to Amsterdam and Rotterdam, where it made horrible carnage in the year 1663. Two Frenchmen are said to have brought it in some woollen goods to London from Holland, in December, 1664. These two Frenchmen, who resided in Longacre, London, on opening their goods, were seized with the plague and died in a day or two in great agonies. Thus began, in London, this terrible scourge, which from December, 1664, to the beginning of 1666, carried off 100,000 souls.

During the dreadful ravages of the plague in London, it is very probable that the then inhabitants of Eyam would hear but very little concerning that calamity. Confined to their secluded vil-

lage, which is surrounded by towering heath-clad hills, they were happily debarred from hearing at every turn that kind of intelligence which casts a gloom over the mind, or shocks the feelings. They were in a great measure unknown; health and plenty dwelt among them; and until the arrival of the fatal box, nothing had occurred to disturb "the even tenor of their way." Accompanied by simplicity and innocence, they sailed down the placid stream of rural life, unannoyed by the ever-fatal storms of avarice and ambition. Ah! up to this awful period they had lived in security and peace: attended by all the blessings of village life—

"The life which those who fret in guilt,
And guilty cities, never know; the life,
Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,
When angels dwelt, and God himself, with Man!"

THOMSON.

Before commencing the details of the arrival of the fatal box in Eyam, it may be interesting to know that the Eyam wakes of that year (1665) had only transpired a few days previously to that event: and it is said that this wakes was peculiarly marked by an unusual number of visitors, as if, as was imagined by the few survivors, these visitors, who were relatives to the villagers of Eyam, had been involuntarily moved to come and take a last farewell of those who were so very soon after destined to be swept away by the plague.* It is also said that the amusements on this occasion were more numerous and entertaining; but in what respect is not now known. Most probably, however,

* The wakes was held then when it ought to be—the first Sunday after the 18th of August, St. Helen's day. The time of holding the annual festival, or wakes, was changed to the last Sunday in August, about a century ago. The cause of this change was the harvest.

they would be of the usual and following character:—relations and friends would assemble at the village alehouses, wishing each other as they raised the sparkling glasses to their lips, many happy returns of the festive time; the young men and maidens would dance upon the spacious village green; they would marry and be “given in marriage;” and numberless other innocent and social amusements would close each gladsome, merry day. Thus these fated beings would enjoy themselves on the brink of death: thus they would revel in pleasure and mirth, unconscious of their speedy doom! But, let me thus interrogate these children of nature in their dust:—Were you not depressed with sad and gloomy sensations? Were you not moved by sudden and strange emotions? Did not some oppressive and unaccountable weight rest on your minds? Did not your lovely homes seem conscious of some “mighty woe”? Did you not behold over the village, DESOLATION written on the sky? Did you not hear the awful footsteps of approaching death? Did not the clouds weep along the hills on that fatal day, when the pestilential box arrived, in which the invisible pest lay concealed—in which that terrible minister of death only slumbered awhile, to awake with greater fury? Horrible was your doom! hapless children of the hills! The struggle, however, is past, and in the beautiful language of Ossian, shall not posterity—

“Awake your memories in your tombs.”

It is singular that all who have hitherto written on this direful calamity, have invariably represented the plague as breaking out in Eyam, in the spring of 1666. This, however, was not the case;

though by far the greater part of the number of victims died in July, August, and September, 1666. The box containing the tailor's patterns in cloth, and it is said some old clothes, was sent from London to a tailor who resided in a small house, at the west end of the church-yard, which has been rebuilt, and is now occupied by a Mr. S. Marsden. The kitchen of the old house is still as it was; it is only the house-place that has been renewed.* Whether the patterns and clothes were bought in London for the tailor at Eyam, or sent as a present, cannot now be ascertained. Some, however, say that it was a relative of the tailor at Eyam who sent them, he having procured them in London, where he resided, very cheaply in consequence of the plague, which was then raging there at its maximum. The box arrived at the tailor's house, Eyam, on the second or third of September, 1665. What the tailor's name was is not satisfactorily known: probably either Thrope or Cooper. The common belief is, that it was a man-servant, or journeyman tailor, who first opened the box, and not one of the family of the tailor, as is often stated. This is evident from the fact, that *Vicars*, the name of the first victim, does not occur again in the list of the names of the victims. And Dr. Mead, who lived a century nearer this occurrence than the present time, says the first victim was a servant. George Vicars, then, was the person who opened the terrible box. In removing the patterns and clothes, he observed in a sort of exclamation, how very damp they were; and he therefore hung them to the fire to dry. While

* In an old flue or chimney belonging to the kitchen of this house, a pair of old leather stays was found some years since. They were supposed to have been there ever since the plague; and were consequently buried with precipitation.

Vicars was superintending them he was suddenly seized with violent sickness and other symptoms of a disease, which greatly alarmed the family of the house, and the neighbourhood. On the second day he grew horribly worse: at intervals he was delirious, and large swellings began to rise about his neck and groin. What medical aid the village afforded was procured, but to no avail. On the third day of his illness the fatal token—the plague spot—appeared on his breast, and he died in horrible agonies the following night, the sixth of September, 1665. The putrid state of his body rendered immediate interment necessary, and he was interred in the church-yard the following day, September the seventh. Thus began, in Eyam, the plague—the most awful of all diseases, which, after being in some measure checked by the severity of the following winter, began to spread amazingly, and eventually left the village nearly desolate.

It is stated that the whole of the family of the first victim, with the solitary exception of one, were speedily carried off by the destructive pest. This, however, is a mistake; for, according to the Register, the second victim, Edward, the son of Edward Cooper, was buried September twenty-second, 1666, after an interval of fourteen days. The remaining days of this month had almost each its victim; and the terrified villagers ascertained the fatal disease to be the plague. Then!

“ Out it burst, a dreadful cry of death;
 ‘ The Plague! the Plague!’ the withering language flew,
 And faintness followed on its rapid breath;
 And all hearts sunk, as pierced with lightning through,
 ‘ The Plague! the Plague! no groundless panic grew;
 But there, sublime in awful darkness, trod
 The pest; and lamentation, as he slew,
 Proclaimed his ravage in each sad abode,
 Mid frenzied shrieks for aid—and vain appeals to God.”

WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

On the last day of September six persons had perished; and by the middle of October twelve more. Consternation and terror reigned throughout the village. The pestilence began to pass from house to house with increasing rapidity; the simple inhabitants looking forward with dreadful apprehension.

Some idea may be formed of the extreme virulence of the plague at Eyam, even at its commencement, by observing that even in large cities the plague has been known to cease in winter. In the first summer of the great plague, at Genoa, 10,000 died, in the winter scarcely any; but in the following summer, 60,000. The great plague in London first appeared in the latter end of 1664, but was checked by winter until the ensuing spring. While at Eyam, where the effects of winter would be considerably greater than in cities, the plague continued its ravages without ceasing. Still it did not attain the height of its destruction and malignancy until the summer of 1666.

Towards the latter end of October the pestilence increased; doleful lamentations issued from the cottages containing the infected persons; the distress of those families is unimaginable; few or none would visit them; they were avoided in the street; all dreaded coming in contact even with those belonging to the families where the infection reigned; they were glanced at with fearful apprehension, and their privations arising therefrom almost defy description. During this awful month twenty-two died. As winter approached the mortality became less, and hopes were entertained that the pestilence would cease. It continued, however, in spite of the weather, to pass from house to house, and in this month, November, seven died. In December,

a great snow is said to have fallen, accompanied with a hard and severe frost. The distress of the inhabitants was very great; the pestilence rather increased, for nine died in December.

During the last four months of 1665, the sufferings of the villagers had been truly dreadful; and though they had become familiar with death, yet they were doomed, in the following summer, to behold the pest assume a far more deadly and fatal aspect. Though the then survivors had seen, in the above time, forty-four of their relatives and friends snatched from amongst them by the terrific hand of pestilential death, yet some few of them were destined to see double that number swept away in the short space of one month. Fated beings! shall not

“The bard preserve your names and send them down to future times?”—OSSIAN.

The weather at the commencement of 1666 was exceedingly cold and severe, which evidently diminished the baneful influence of the plague. Nothing could exceed the joy manifested by the villagers at there being, as they supposed, some prospect of being delivered from that scourge. The pestilence was now confined to two houses; and on the last day of January only four had died during that month. In February, however, eight died, and there were many affected.

I shall in this place, while the plague is the least furious, take the liberty of noticing some few particulars respecting the two unrivalled characters, who may be justly said to have been by their joint exertions, the principal instruments by whom Derbyshire and the neighbouring counties were delivered from the desolating plague,—the Rev. Thomas Stanley and the Rev. William Mompesson.

We shall see when we come to the time of the greatest fury of the plague, that the salvation of the surrounding country, originated in the wisdom of these two worthy divines. Their magnanimous conduct on this awful occasion can only be exceeded by the obedience of the sufferers over whom they exercised such heavenly influence. "One can scarcely decide," says Mr. Samuel Roberts, "in this case, which most to admire, the wisdom of the pastor, or the obedience of his flock. It was a sacrifice in either case, which we are utterly unable duly to appreciate. I can form no conception of any instance, in mere human beings, more strongly proving the blessed effects of true Christianity than this, of faith no stronger, no obedience more perfect." The same writer thus very justly observes :—"Ought not a monument to have been erected, by the nation, to the memory of all those who fell victims, and a liberal national annuity to have been granted to each of the heroic survivors. They have, however, monuments to their memories, in the hearts of all truly good and sympathizing men."

The Rev. Thomas Stanley was born at Duckmanton, near Chesterfield. His public ministry was exercised at Handsworth, Dore, and eight years at Ashford, whence, by those in power, he was translated, in 1644, to the rectory of Eyam, where he continued to reside, respected, esteemed, and loved until Bartholomew-day, 1662. He continued to preach, however, in private houses at Eyam, Hazleford, and other places, until his death, in 1670. This very worthy man was succeeded by his predecessor, the Rev. Sherland Adams, who died in 1664. The successor of this litigious divine, was the Rev. William Mompesson,

chaplain to Sir George Saville. Before his coming to Eyam, in April, 1664, he had married a beautiful young lady, Catherine, the daughter of Ralph Carr, Esq., of Cocken, in the county of Durham. She was young and possessed good parts, with exquisitely tender feelings. These two illustrious characters (Stanley and Mompesson) throughout the fury of the pestilence, as we shall see hereafter, forsook not their flock, but visited, counselled, and exhorted them in their sufferings; alleviated their miseries, and held fast to their duties on the very threshold of death.

On the first of March, 1666, the plague had carried off fifty-six souls; and during this month but little abatement was perceived in the number infected. Six died in this month. In the succeeding month April, nine; and in May, three. This seeming relaxation of fury in the latter month, inspired the trembling villagers with a ray of delusive hope: they began to ascribe the past malignancy of the pest to the severity of the winter, and the fearful dismay which had oppressed their drooping spirits, began to subside. But, alas! while these innocent and simple beings were indulging in this vain dream, the plague, that subtle and mysterious minister of death, was only resting and gathering strength to make more horrible slaughter. At the commencement of June this deadly monster awoke from his short slumber; and with desolating steps stalked forth from house to house, breathing on the terror-struck inhabitants, the vapour of death. The irresistible rage of the pest filled the hearts of the trembling villagers with dreadful forebodings: despair seized every soul. Loud and bitter lamentations burst forth from every infected house! Fear and apprehension

prevented ingress to these abodes of distress. Horror and dismay enveloped the village! The extreme dread even of the uninfected, led them to the practice of a thousand weak and absurd expedients, to prevent them from taking the distemper. Numberless omens and presages of their dreadful calamities, the terrified inhabitants could now call to mind. Some said that the desolation of the village had been at various times prognosticated. Many could recollect having seen the white cricket, and heard it sound the death-knell on their hearths. Others remembered having heard for three successive nights the invisible "death-watch" in the dead of night. And some called to mind how often during a few preceding winters they had listened to the doleful howlings of the Gabriel-hounds.

These, with numerous other fanciful tokens of death, these simple and horrified villagers imagined at this awful time they had seen and heard. Nor would it have been marvellous, had they imagined they beheld with Ossian's Melilcoma, "the awful faces of other times looking from the clouds."

As June advanced, the pestilence spread from house to house with dreadful rapidity; sparing neither sex nor age.

"Health, strength, and infancy, and age
In vain the ruthless foe engage."—HOLLAND.

The unexampled mortality of the plague during the summer of 1666, is, as I have before stated, unequalled in history. Some have supposed that this destructive scourge was aggravated to its unparalleled fury at Eyam by the ignorance and destitution of the inhabitants; and their consequent maltreatment of the distemper. Others have conjectured that it was aided in its dreadful career by

the hotness of the summer ; this season being in those times, in the Peak, more sultry, but much shorter. This change is said to have arisen from the extensive inclosures, and the spirited cultivation of the surrounding moors. But the proximate cause of this unheard of mortality was undoubtedly the courageous determination of the villagers to confine themselves within a certain boundary ; for if those who fell a sacrifice in July, August, September, and October, had fled in the spring, they would most probably have escaped ; but then there was this danger, had they not taken that magnanimous step :—the infected would have fled with the non-infected, and thereby have carried desolation wherever they went. Hence, I imagine, we may trace the principal and efficient cause of that horrible carnage among the meritorious villagers of Eyam.

Up to the beginning of June seventy-four had perished from the commencement of the pest ; this number of deaths, from a population of 350, was very great in so short a time ; but, how incomparable to the dreadful havoc of the ensuing months of June, July, August, September, and October.

It was about the middle of June, that the plague began to assume so terrible an aspect. Terror overwhelmed the hearts of the villagers. Mrs. Mompesson threw herself and two children, George and Elizabeth, of three and four years old, at the feet of her husband, imploring their immediate departure from the devoted place ! Her entreaties and tears sensibly moved the feelings of her husband. But Mompesson, whose love for his wife and children was never exceeded, whose eyes were suffused with tears by this energetic and truly

pathetic appeal, raised her from his feet, and in the most affectionate manner, told her, that his duty to his suffering and diminishing flock—that the indelible stain that would rest on his memory by deserting them in the hour of danger—and that the awful responsibility to his Maker, for the charge he had undertaken, were considerations with him of more weight and importance than life itself! He then again, in the most enthusiastic manner, endeavoured to prevail on his weeping partner to take their two lovely babes and fly to some place of refuge until the plague was stayed! She, however, steadfastly resisted his persuasions, and emphatically declared her determination that nothing should induce her to leave him amidst that destructive and terrible whirlpool of death! This affecting contest ended in their mutual consent to send the children away to a relative in Yorkshire, (supposed to be J. Beilby, Esq.,) until the pestilence ceased. There is a tradition of the mournful parting of the children and parents on this occasion. Mompesson called them aside, and, suppressing the bitterness of his feelings, gave each a parting kiss, and fervently admonished them to be obedient and good! Their tender and loving mother grasped each in her arms, and in the intervals of heart-bursting sighs kissed them again and again! When they departed, she ran to the highest window of their dwelling and watched them leave the village. As she caught the last glance of them, a sudden and startling thought crossed her mind that she should behold them no more! She uttered a shrill and piercing scream! Mompesson hastened to her side and endeavoured to console her in the most soothing language imaginable! In the first paroxysm of her grief

she intently gazed towards the spot where they last met her view ; nor would she be removed from the place, until the streaming tears

“ Rushed from her clouded brain,
Like mountain mists, at length dissolved to rain.”

BYRON.

Alas ! alas ! her forebodings were realised : in this world she beheld her children no more : she took the infection, and died, as we shall hereafter see, blessing her children with her last parting breath !

It was at this period of the calamity (about the middle of June) that the inhabitants began to think of escaping from death by flight. Indeed, the most wealthy of them, who were but few in number, fled early in the spring with the greatest precipitation. Some few others, having means, fled to the neighbouring hills and dells, and there erected huts ; and dwelled therein, until the approach of winter. But it was the visible manifestation of a determination in the whole mass to flee, that aroused Mompesson ; he energetically remonstrated with them on the danger of flight ; he told them of the fearful consequences that would ensue ; that the safety of the surrounding country was in their hands ; that it was impossible for them to escape death by flight ; that a many of them were infected ; that the invisible seeds of the disease lay concealed in their clothing and other articles they had prepared to take with them ; and that if they would relinquish their fatal and terrible purpose, he would write to all the influential persons in the vicinity for aid ; he would by every possible means in his power endeavour to alleviate their sufferings ; and he would remain with them, and sacrifice his life rather than be instrumental in

desolating the surrounding country! Thus spoke this wonderful man! Let us, however, hear his entreaties on this awful occasion in the words of the poet:—

“ Alas! beloved friends! Alas! where strays
Your wonted mind? What means these signs of flight?
Is God unpitying, though He wrath displays?
Is the sun quenched when clouds obscure his light?
Oh! calm your trembling souls, be strong in Christian might.
Here we may strive and conquer, and may save
Our country from this desolating curse;
Some few, perchance, may fill an earlier grave;
But, if ye fly, it follows, and ye nurse
Death in your flight; wide, wider ye disperse
Destruction through the land. Oh, then! bow down
And vow to Him to virtue ne’er averse,
To stand unshrinking ‘neath death’s fiercest frown.
Then Heaven shall give us rest, and earth a fair renown.”

WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

The inhabitants, with a superhuman courage, gave up all thoughts of flight. Mompesson, immediately wrote to the Earl of Devonshire, then at Chatsworth, a few miles from Eyam, stating the particulars of the calamity, and adding that he was certain, that he could prevail on his suffering and hourly diminishing flock, to confine themselves within the precincts of the village if they could be supplied with victuals and other necessary articles, and thereby prevent the pestilence from spreading. The Noble Earl expressed in his answer, deep commiseration for the sufferers; and he further assured Mompesson, that nothing should be spared on his part, to mitigate the calamitous sufferings of the inhabitants—provided they kept themselves within a specified bound. This worthy Nobleman, who remained at Chatsworth during the whole time of the plague, generously ordered the sufferers to be supplied with all kinds of necessaries, agreeably to the following plan.

A kind of circle was drawn round the village, marked by particular and well known stones and hills; beyond which it was solemnly agreed that no one of the villagers should proceed, whether infected or not. This circle extended about half a mile around the village; and at two or three places or points of this boundary, provisions were brought. The places on the circle were appointed in different directions, in order that the pestilential effluvia might not be directed all in one way, by those set apart to fetch the articles left, and who might be infected. A well, or rivulet, northward of Eyam, called to this day, "Mompesson's Well," or "Mompesson's Brook," was one of the places where articles were deposited. These articles were brought very early in the morning, by persons from the adjoining villages, who, when they had delivered them beside the well, fled with the precipitation of panic. Persons set apart by Mompesson and Stanley fetched the articles left; and when they took money, it was deposited in the Well and certain distant troughs, to be purified, and to prevent contagion by passing from hand to hand. The persons who brought the articles were careful to wash the money well before they took it away. An account was left at this and other places of the progress of the disease, the number of deaths, and other particulars. When money was sent, it was only for some extra or particular articles: the provisions and many other necessaries were supplied, it is generally asserted, by the Earl of Devonshire.—The Cliffe, between Stoney Middleton and Eyam, was another place on the circle appointed for this purpose. A large vessel of water stood there, in which money and other things were deposited for purifi-

cation. There are other places of this sort pointed out, but these were the most particular.

It is said that no one ever crossed this *cordon sanitaire* from within or without, during the awful calamity: this, however, is not precisely correct. One person, as we shall see hereafter, crossed it from without at the sacrifice of life; and in a subsequent part I shall give some interesting particulars of some who crossed it from within. It must be granted, however, that it was to the prescribing of this boundary and other precautions attendant thereon, that the country around was saved from this most horrible pestilence. The wisdom of Mompesson, who is said to have originated this plan, can only be surpassed in degree by the courage of the inhabitants in not trespassing beyond the bounds prescribed, whom, as Miss Seward justly observes, "a cordon of soldiers could not have prevented against their will, much less could any watch which might have been set by the neighbourhood, have effected that important purpose." The annals of mankind afford no instance of such magnanimous conduct in a joint number of persons." And ages pass away without being honoured by such an immortal character as Mompesson, who, while the black sword of pestilence was dealing death around him, voluntarily "put his life in his hand," from an exalted sense of duty,—for the salvation of the country. Towards the latter end of June, the plague began to rage more fearfully. Nothing but lamentations were heard in the village. The passing bell ceased, the church yard was no longer resorted to for interment, and the church door closed.

"Contagion closed the portal of the fane
In which he wont the bread of life to deal;
He then a temple sought, not made with hands,
But reared by Him, amidst whose works it stood
Rudely magnificent."

ROBERTS.

Mompesson, at this juncture, deeming it dangerous to assemble in the Church during the hot weather, proposed to meet his daily diminishing flock in the Delf, a secluded dingle a little south of Eyam, and there read prayers twice a week, and deliver his customary sermons on the Sabbath, from a perforated arch in an ivy-mantled rock. The ghastly hearers seated themselves at some distance from each other on the grassy slope, opposite the rocky pulpit. Thither they assembled one by one for many a Sabbath morn, leaving at their mournful homes, some a father, some a mother, some a brother, and some a child struggling with death. They glanced at each other with looks of unutterable woe, asking in silence, "whom Fate would next demand." Mompesson, from the massive cut, lifted up his voice to heaven and called aloud on the God of mercy to stay the deadly pest, while the fervent responses of the shuddering hearers dolefully echoed from the caverns around. Thus they assembled in the sacred dell, while each succeeding Sabbath told the horrid work of death. "Do you not see," says Miss Seward, "this dauntless minister of God stretching forth his hand from the rock, instructing and consoling his distressed flock in that little wilderness? How solemn, how affecting, must have been the pious exhortations of these terrible hours." Rhodes observes, "that Paul preaching at Athens, or John the Baptist in the wilderness, scarcely excites a more powerful and solemn interest than this minister of God, this 'legate of the skies,' when contemplated on this trying occasion, 'when he stood between the dead and living, and the plague was stayed.'" Numbers, chap. 16, verse 48. This romantic arch has, from that terrible time, always been designated "Cucklett Church." How insensible to the

awfulness of that horrible season must be that being who can tread this hallowed dell and not hear

“ Amidst the rocks an awful sound
In deep reverberation sigh,
And all the echoing caverns round
With mournful voices far reply,
As if, in those sepulchral caves,
The dead were speaking from their graves.”

BRETTELL.

Few or no instances are on record, of the extinction of life in a joint number of mortals, attended with such trying and appalling circumstances as the plague at Eyam, in July, August, and September, 1666. During these dreadful months, the terrific sufferings of the inhabitants almost defy description. Parents beheld their children fall in direful succession by the hand of the insatiable and purple-visaged pest. Children turned aside with fearful dread at the distorted features of their parents in death. Every family while they were any left, buried their own dead; and one hapless woman, in the space of a few days, as we shall hereafter see, dug the graves for, and buried with her own hands, her husband and six children. Appalling as such a circumstance must be, it is, however, only one of a very many of that dreadful time.

We are now arriving at the period when the fury of the pestilence attained its maximum: when it threatened the terrified villagers with utter extermination. Fear and dismay overshadowed their souls; they shrunk back with terror at the increasing ravages of this most capricious, indescribable, and horrid disease; which, in the beautiful language of the poet,—

“ Darts in the whirlwind—floats upon the breeze—
Creeps down the vales, and hangs upon the trees—

Strikes in a sunbeam—in the evening cool—
 Flags on the fog, and stagnates on the pool—
 In films ætherial, taints the vital air—
 Steals through a pore, and creeps along a hair—
 Invades the eye in light—the ear in sounds—
 Kills with a touch, and at a distance wounds.”—FURNESS.

A few of the last days of June were exceedingly hot, and the infection spread with horrible rapidity. The Church-yard closed its gates against the dead. Funeral rites were no longer read; coffins and shrouds were no longer thought off; an old door or chair was at first the bier on which the dead were borne; and a half-made grave or hole hastily dug in the fields and gardens round the cottages, received each putrid corpse ere life was quite extinct. With the commencement of July, the weather became extremely warm and sultry; and the rage of the pest really terrific. Dreadful wailings burst forth from every side; and the countenances of the few who ventured abroad were deeply impressed with the visible signs of inward horror. The village was unfrequented; it stood, as it were out of the world; none came to sympathise with its suffering inhabitants: no traveller passed through the lonely street during that awful time: it was regarded and avoided, as the valley of death! Horror and Destruction rode, and marked the boundary of the dreadful place. On the clouds that hung gloomily over the village were written “Pestilence and Death:” at which terrific inscription, the approaching stranger turned aside and precipitately fled; haunted and chased by horrid and terrible fears. Thus, helpless and alone, perished the villagers of Eyam, for the salvation of the country:—

“ Struck by turns, in solitary pangs
 They fell, unblest, untended, and upmourn’d.”—THOMSON.

It is impossible for pen to describe, or imagination to conceive, the unspeakable distress of those who resided in that part of the village, and in those houses, where the plague raged from first to last, with the greatest violence. Some dwellings in July, and especially in August, contained at one moment both the dying and the dead. In one individual house, a victim was struggling with death, while they were hurrying another therefrom to a grave in the fields. In another, a few were anxiously watching and wishing for the last convulsive gasp, that the victim might be instantly interred, and that "so much of the disease might be buried, and its influence destroyed." The open day witnessed the putrid bodies of the victims pass along the street; and sable night was startled at the frequent footsteps of the buriers of the dead. The horrid symptom of the last stage of the disease in almost every victim, was the signal for the digging of a grave, or rather hole, to which the deceased, placed on the first thing at hand, or more often dragged on the ground, was speedily hurried and buried with inconceivable precipitation; "even whilst the limbs were yet warm, and almost palpitating with life." So anxious were they for immediate interment, that some were buried close by their cottage doors, and it is said, some in the back parts of the very houses in which they died. In this state of things passed day after day, and week after week. The terrified villagers had for some time forsaken their wonted occupations; the untended cattle lowed mournfully on the neighbouring hills; the fields and gardens became a wilderness; and family feuds and personal animosities sank in oblivion! Nothing was now scarcely seen, save—

"The deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,

The lip pale-quivering, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright."

THOMSON.

Every family up to July had been from dire necessity compelled to bury their own dead ; for no one would touch, nor even glance at a corpse that did not belong to his own house or family. But when, as was now frequently the case, the last of a family died, or when one died in a house and the others were dying, some person was necessitated, however dangerous the task, to undertake the charge of removing the unsightly corpse, and instantly burying it. For this hazardous but necessary purpose, the All-wise Providence had endowed with sufficient nerve, hardihood, and indifference the person of Marshall Howe, a man of gigantic stature, a native of the village, and of a most courageous calibre. The daring conduct of this individual in that terrible time, has rendered his name familiar with the villagers of Eyam to the present day. During the greatest fury of the plague, he filled the fearful office of burier of the dead. It appears, however, that he took the distemper nearly at the time of its first appearance, but recovered ; and from a belief that a person was never attacked twice, much of his intrepidity may be ascribed. Covetousness, or avarice, seems to have instigated him in part, to undertake his perilous vocation. When he learned that some one was dying, without relatives to take charge of interment, he immediately proceeded to a garden or adjoining field, and opened a grave ; then he hastened to the house where the victim lay still warm with life, and tying one end of a cord round the neck of the corpse, he threw the other over his shoulder and dragged it forth through the street to the grave, and with an "unhallowed haste" lightly

covered it with earth. The money, furniture, clothes, and other effects of the deceased were his unenviable remuneration. For near three months he was thus employed. By some, however, he was paid a stipulated sum for interring their deceased relatives; acquiring in this manner both money and valuables. Through burying the last victims of the pest houses, he took and claimed whatever he found therein; and in alluding to the quantity of clothing he had thus obtained, he jocularly observed, that "he had pinners and napkins sufficient to kindle his pipe with while he lived." Such was the awful occupation of Marshall Howe during the most horrible ravages of the plague; he, however, tasted the bitter draught, by burying with his own hands, his wife on the twenty-seventh, and his son on the thirtieth of August of the fatal 1666. For a generation or two after the plague, parents in Eyam endeavoured to bring their children to rule and obedience by telling them that they would send for Marshall Howe.

A few of the last days of July were really dreadful; sometimes five, sometimes six died in one day; and in the whole month fifty-seven. But it was in August that the pest bared his arm for the most deadly slaughter. The weather became in this month remarkably hot, and the pestilence spread throughout the village. Distraction overwhelmed the hourly diminishing villagers; some lay in a death-like stupor, anticipating their doom; others ran about the street in a state of madness, until they suddenly dropped down dead. From every house that was not empty, loud and dismal cries issued forth, mixed with violent exclamations of pain; and as Ossian sings, "the groan of the people spread over the hills." The swellings in

the neck and groin of the patient became insufferable when they would not burst, and the torment was unspeakably excruciating. All now expected death ; no one cherished a hope of escaping ; and a mournful gloom settled on the features of the few who ventured to pace the lonely street. Those who fetched from the stated places the victuals and other articles were marked on the brow by sullen despair ; and even

“ The very children had imbibed a look
Of such unutterable woe, as told
A tale of sorrows indescribable.”

ROBERTS.

As August advanced, the mortality increased with inconceivable rapidity. The wakes came on again, but alas ! alas ! how awful the change. The remaining few thought not of their wonted joy ; they breathed not its name, for all their thoughts were full of death ! The festive Sunday passed away, with all the stillness of the grave ; none watched for the arrival of relations and friends ; no village choristers assembled at the church ; nor did the cheerful bells call aloud to the hills to be merry and glad. Nearly all who had tripped upon the village-green, at the last anniversary of this till then happy time, were now, uncoffined, laid in their graves.

Towards the latter end of the fatal month, near four-fifths of the inhabitants were swept away. Mompesson, during the whole time, unremittingly went from house to house comforting, as much as possible, his dying flock. He, however, was an ailing man, and had an issue in his leg. One day his beloved wife observed a green ichor issuing from the wound, which she conceived to be the result of his having taken the distemper, and its having found a vent that way. Great was her joy

on this occasion ; and though Mompesson thought she was mistaken, yet he, as we shall see in his letter to his children, fully and duly appreciated her extreme anxiousness for his welfare. This admirable and worthy man was now destined to drink of the sickening cup which had been passing round the village. Catherine, his beloved partner, had, during the spring, shown symptoms of a pulmonary consumption. She is represented to have been exceedingly beautiful though very delicate. There is a very current tradition in the village, that on the morning of the twenty-second of August, 1666, Mompesson and his wife walked out arm in arm in the fields adjoining the Rectory, as had been their custom for some months in the spring, hoping that the morning air would restore her convalescency. During this walk she had been dwelling on her usual theme—her two absent children, when, just as they were leaving the last field for their habitation, she suddenly exclaimed: “ Oh ! Mompesson ! the air ! how sweet it smells ! ” These words went through the very soul of Mompesson, and his heart sunk within him ! He made some evasive reply, and they entered their dwelling. The lapse of a few hours confirmed his fearful anticipation from her remark in the fields : she had taken the distemper, the horrid symptoms appeared, she became at intervals delirious, and before night no hope was entertained of her recovery. Mompesson seemed for awhile unable to stand the terrible shock ; distraction overwhelmed him, and he stood at her bedside a statue of despair. He, however, after the first paroxysm of grief was past, began, with a fortitude unexampled, to use every means imaginable to arrest the progress of the disease. Cordials and chemical antidotes were administered

by his own hand ; but, alas ! in vain. She struggled with the invincible pest until the morning of the twenty-fourth, when her spirit took its flight to the regions of bliss. Mompesson cast himself beside her putrid corpse ; and in the agony of despair bathed her cold and pallid face with burning tears. The domestics came and led him faltering away ; yet ere he left the room he turned, and, sobbing, cried “ farewell ! farewell ! all happy days ! ” He repaired to his closet, and on his bended knees lifted up his voice to heaven ; while,

“ One lightning-winged cry
 Shot through the hamlet ; and a wailing grew,
 Wilder than when the plague-fiend first drew nigh,
 One troublous hour,—and from all quarters fly
 The wretched remnant, who had ceased to weep ;
 But sorrow, which had drained their bosoms dry,
 Found yet fresh fountains in the spirit deep,
 Wringing out burning tears that loved one’s couch to steep.”
 WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

She who had been a few days past so lovely and beautiful, was now a livid corpse ; she who had been the object of every attention, now lay lone and still, guarded from every eye by dreadful apprehension.

“ Ah ! then Mompesson felt
 What human tongue nor poet’s pen must feign—
 Quick to the grave the kindred earth was given
 With e’en affection’s last sad pledge forgone,
 The mortal kiss—for round those blighted lips,
 Exhaled the ling’ring spirit of the pest,
 As if in triumph o’er all that was once
 So lovely and beloved.”

HOLLAND.

Thus, this lovely and amiable woman fell a victim to the plague in the twenty-seventh year of her age. Her resolution to abide with her husband in defiance of death, is a striking instance of the strength and purity of female affection. She

was interred the day after her death, August, the twenty-fifth, 1666, in the church-yard at Eyam. Over her ashes her loving and truly affectionate husband erected a splendid tomb, which, with its inscription and devices, will be described hereafter.

Great as was the calamity that had visited and was still visiting almost every family in the fated village : terrible as was the devastation of the pestilence in August, yet the very few inhabitants that were left nearly forgot their own sufferings and distress in the death of Mrs. Mompesson. They had witnessed in her worthy husband, so much sympathy and benevolence, so much attention and human feeling, that they regarded him as their counsellor, physician, and friend, and hence their participation in his sorrow for the loss of his lovely and amiable wife. The trying situation, the lacerated sensations of this incomparable man will be best shown by the two following letters, written with his own hand a few days after the interment of his affectionate spouse.

To his dear children he thus announces the death of their mother :—

“ To my dear children, George and Elizabeth Mompesson, these present with my blessing.

“ Eyam, August 31, 1666.

“ **DEAR HEARTS,**—This brings you the doleful news of your dear mother's death—the greatest loss which ever befel you ! I am not only deprived of a kind and loving consort, but you also are bereaved of the most indulgent mother that ever dear children had. We must comfort ourselves in God with this consideration, that the loss is only ours, and that what is our sorrow is her gain. The consideration of her joys, which I do assure myself are unutterable, should refresh our drooping spirits.

“ My children, I think it may be useful to you to have a narrative of your dear mother's virtues, that the knowledge thereof may teach you to imitate her excellent qualities. In the first place, let me recommend to you her piety and devotion, which

were according to the exact principles of the Church of England. In the next place, I can assure you, she was composed of modesty and humility, which virtues did possess her dear soul in a most exemplary manner. Her discourse was ever grave and meek, yet pleasant also; an immodest word was never heard to come from her mouth. She had two other virtues, modesty and frugality. She never valued any thing she had, when the necessities of a poor neighbour required it; but had a bountiful spirit towards the distressed and indigent; yet she was never lavish, but commendably frugal. She never liked tattling women, and abhorred the custom of going from house to house, thus wastefully spending precious time. She was ever busied in useful work, yet, though prudent, she was affable and kind. She avoided those whose company could not benefit her, and would not unbosom herself to such, still she dismissed them with civility. I could tell you of her many other excellent virtues. I do believe, my dear hearts, that she was the kindest wife in the world, and think from my soul, that she loved me ten times better than herself; for she not only resisted my entreaties, that she should fly with you, dear children, from this place of death, but, some few days before it pleased God to visit my house, she perceived a green matter to come from the issue in my leg, when she fancied a symptom that the distemper, raging amongst us, had found a vent that way, whence she assured herself that I was passed the malignity of the disorder, whereat she rejoiced exceedingly, not considering her own danger thereby. I think, however, that she was mistaken in the nature of the discharge she saw: certainly it was the salve that made it look so green; yet her rejoicing was a strong testimony that she cared not for her own peril so I were safe.

“Further, I can assure you, that her love to you was little inferior than to me; since why should she thus ardently desire my long continuance in this world of sorrows, but that you might have the protection and comfort of my life. You little imagine with what delight she talked of you both, and the pains she took when you suckled your milk from her breasts. She gave strong testimony of her love for you when she lay on her death-bed. A few hours before she expired I wished her to take some cordials, which she told me plainly she could not take. I entreated she would attempt for your dear sakes. At the mention of your names, she with difficulty lifted up her head and took them: this was to testify to me her affection for you.

“Now I will give you an exact account of the manner of her death. For some time she had shown symptoms of a consumption, and was wasted thereby. Being surrounded by infected families, she doubtless got the distemper from them; and her natural strength being impaired, she could not struggle with the disease, which made her illness so very short. She showed

much contrition for the errors of her past life, and often cried out,—‘One drop of my Saviour’s blood, to save my soul.’ She earnestly desired me not to come near her, lest I should receive harm thereby; but, thank God, I did not desert her, but stood to my resolution not to leave her in her sickness, who had been so tender a nurse to me in her health. Blessed be God, that He enabled me to be so helpful and consoling to her, for which she was not a little thankful. During her illness she was not disturbed by worldly business—she only minded making her call and election sure; and she asked pardon of her maid, for having sometimes given her an angry word. I gave her some sweating antidotes, which rather inflamed her more, whereupon her dear head was distempered, which put her upon many incoherencies. I was troubled thereat, and propounded to her questions in divinity. Though in all other things she talked at random, yet to these religious questions, she gave me as rational answers as could be desired. I bade her repeat after me certain prayers, which she did with great devotion,—it gave me comfort that God was so gracious to her.

“A little before she died, she asked me to pray with her again. I asked her how she did? The answer was, that she was looking when the good hour should come. Thereupon I prayed, and she made her responses from the Common Prayer Book, as perfectly as in her health, and an ‘Amen’ to every pathetic expression. When we had ended the prayers for the sick, we used those from the Whole Duty of Man! and when I heard her say nothing, I said, ‘My dear, dost thou mind?’ She answered, ‘Yes,’ and it was the last word she spoke.

“My dear babes, the reading of this account will cause many a salt tear to spring from your eyes; yet let this comfort you—your mother is a saint in heaven.

“Now, to that blessed God, who bestowed upon her all ‘those graces,’ be ascribed all honour, glory, and dominion, the just tribute of all created beings, for evermore.—Amen!

“WILLIAM MOMPESSEON.”

Is there not in this truly pathetic letter, the visible effusion of a purely Christian spirit,—the bright effulgence of a heavenly mind, which shall command the admiration of succeeding generations, to the end of time? On the same melancholy event, the following letter was written by Mompesson, to his friend and patron, Sir George Saville:—

“ Eyam, September 1, 1666.

“ HONOURED AND DEAR SIR,—This is the saddest news that ever my pen could write! The destroying Angel having taken up his quarters within my habitation, my dearest wife is gone to her eternal rest, and is invested with a crown of righteousness, having made a happy end. Indeed, had she loved herself as well as me, she had fled from the pit of destruction with the sweet babes, and might have prolonged her days; but she was resolved to die a martyr to my interests. My drooping spirits are much refreshed with her joys, which I think are unutterable.

“ Sir, this paper is to bid you a hearty farewell for ever, and to bring you my humble thanks for all your noble favours; and I hope you will believe a dying man, I have as much love as honour for you, and I will bend my feeble knees to the God of Heaven, that you, my dear lady, and your children and their children, may be blessed with external and eternal happiness, and that the same blessing may fall upon Lady Sunderland and her relations.

“ Dear Sir, let your dying Chaplain recommend this truth to you and your family, that no happiness or solid comfort can be found in this vale of tears, like living a pious life; and pray ever remember this rule, *never do anything upon which you dare not first ask the blessing of God.*

“ Sir, I have made bold in my will with your name for executor, and I hope you will not take it ill. I have joined two others with you, who will take from you the trouble. Your favourable aspect will, I know, be a great comfort to my distressed orphans. I am not desirous that they should be great, but good; and my next request is, that they be brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

“ Sir, I thank God I am contented to shake hands with all the world; and have many comfortable assurances that God will accept me through his Son. I find the goodness of God greater than I ever thought or imagined; and I wish from my soul that it were not so much abused and continued. I desire, Sir, that you will be pleased to make choice of a humble, pious man, to succeed me in my parsonage; and could I see your face before my departure hence, I would inform you in what manner I think he may live comfortable amongst his people, which would be some satisfaction to me before I die.

“ Dear Sir, I beg the prayers of all about you that I may not be daunted by the powers of hell; and that I may have dying graces: with tears I beg, that when you are praying for fatherless orphans, you would remember my two pretty babes.

“ Pardon the rude style of this paper, and be pleased to believe that I am, dear Sir, &c.

“ WILLIAM MOMPESON.”

“ In the whole range of literature,” says William and Mary Howitt, “ we know of nothing more pathetic than these letters ;” alluding, besides these two, to another, dated Eyam, Nov. 20, 1666, which will be found hereafter.

It is singular, indeed, that Mompesson enjoyed such remarkable good health during the whole time of the calamitous visitation : he, in the language of the poet,

“ Drew, like Marseilles’ good bishop, purer breath,
When nature sickened, and each gale was death.”

From house to house he went, and prayed with the dying victims :—

“ Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
‘ The reverend champion stood.’” GOLDSMITH.

From the interment of Mrs. Mompesson (August the twenty-fifth) to the end of the month, the pestilence raged with unabated fury : although four-fifths of the population were swept away. On the twenty-sixth of this terrible month, Marshall Howe, who had been daily employed in hurrying the dead to their unhallowed graves, was doomed to experience a loss, equal in his own estimation to that of his pastor. Joan his wife, who had often remonstrated with him to desist from his perilous avocation, was seized with the distemper : and the virulence of the attack threatened almost immediate dissolution. Though he had been, for full two months, moving in the whirlwind of death, yet up to this time, he had doomed himself invulnerable to the pest ; but the infection of his wife brought conviction to his mind, that he had been the means of bringing the disease across his own threshold ; and he wept bitterly. The direful symptom appeared on the snow-white bosom of his

beloved Joan : and early on the morning of the twenty-seventh she breathed her last. Marshall wept aloud over her stiffening limbs ; but ere the sun had tipped with gold the orient hills of Eyam, he wound her up and carried her in his brawny arms to a neighbouring field, where he dug a grave and placed her silently therein. A sullen sadness overspread his mien, while over her remains he patted the earth with an unusual and unconscious circumspection. Filled with gloomy sensations he returned to his home, but, alas ! there he found his only, his dearest son William, struggling with the pest. Despair “ whirled his brain to madness :” he cast himself on a couch and uttered doleful lamentations. William, his beloved son, who had inherited something of his father’s iron constitution, wrestled with the horrid and deadly monster until the morning of the third day of his sickness, when he yielded to his direful and mortal antagonist. His disconsolate father bore his warm but lifeless corpse to the grave of his wife, beside which he buried it, while floods of tears bespoke his inconceivable agony. The necessity, however, of Marshall Howe, compelled him to continue in the office of burier of the dead. But the recklessness and levity which he had exhibited were no longer observable after the bereavement of his wife and son. The terrified and fast dwindling villagers were no longer startled, when he returned from the interment of a victim in the Cussy-dell, by the following observation which, on these occasions, he invariably made :—“ Ah ! I saw Old N—k grinning on the ivied rock as I dragged such-a-one along the dell !” Marshall survived the plague a many years.

The last day of August, the sixth and twenty-

sixth, were the only days during that awful month on which none died : while the whole number who perished in the other twenty-eight days was seventy-eight. This number of deaths must be considered really appalling, especially when it is taken into estimation that the population of the village on the first of August was considerably under two hundred. The havoc in this month was dreadful beyond all description. The houses from the eastern end to the middle of the village were now nearly all empty. An awful gloom pervaded this part; broken, however, at times by the sudden shriek of one whom the blood-scented pest discovered in some lone and secluded corner. The inhabitants of the extreme western part of the village, who were at that time very few, shut themselves close up in their houses; nor would they on any occasion whatever, cross a small rivulet eastward, which runs under the street in that part of Eyam. That portion of the street which crosses this small stream is called at this day " Fiddlers-Bridge;" and it is very commonly asserted, that the plague never crossed it westward. This, I think, is hardly correct; but as there were but very few inhabitants in that direction, the plague could not make any great devastation. Indeed, as we shall see hereafter, those who fled at the breaking out of the disease, were principally, if not exclusively, inhabitants of that part, and consequently, there would be but very few left. One man, however, in the upper or western part of the village, is said to have taken the distemper and died by intending to visit a sister who was a widow, and who dwelt in the Lydgate, or the eastern part of Eyam. It is told, that this man heard by chance, late one evening, in the latter end of August, that his sister, for whom he had

the greatest affection, was taken ill of the plague. Being much troubled, he came to the determination of visiting her, even at the sacrifice of life. Early next morning, he arose, unknown to his family, and proceeded down the silent street to her abode. The door opened at his touch, but all was still, he hastened to her bed, but it was empty and stripped. No enquiry of the fate of his sister was requisite; she had died the preceding night, and Marshall Howe had consigned her to a grave in an adjoining garden, and had rifled her dwelling long before the break of day. The man returned to his family full of grief and sorrow; but, he went not alone—the invisible pest accompanied him, and swept him and all his family into their graves, in the short space of a few days. Thus, like leaves in Autumn, fell the villagers of Eyam, in the terrible and fatal month of August, 1666.

September was unusually hot, and the plague raged with unmitigated violence, considering the amount of population left. Almost every day in this month had its victim; and the few that were left, were now become so familiar with death, that the announcement of the dissolution of any no longer excited scarcely any notice whatever. A dreamy stillness reigned around the nearly desolated village; it was canopied by a dark and deepening gloom, which fancy might imagine had been formed by the incessant accumulation of sorrowful respirations. The last day of September was one of the few days during that month unattended by the death of a victim. Although the inhabitants at the beginning of September were reduced to a very few, still the insatiated pest carried away twenty-four during that month. October came, the month in which it ceased; yet, up to the eleventh, it still

carried on the work of destruction, with but little relaxation of fury. On the eleventh of October, 1666, this awful minister of death, after having from the first day of the same month, destroyed fifteen out of about forty-five, totally ceased. After having swept away five-sixths of the inhabitants of Eyam, this the greatest enemy of the human race, was exhausted with excessive slaughter, and in the last conflict, worsted and destroyed and buried with the last victim.

Of the number who perished at Eyam by the hand of this direful plague, there are different accounts. The Register, which is undoubtedly as correct as can be expected from the confusion of the time, states the number of victims to be 259; while there is another account as follows:—"259 of ripe age, and 58 children."* But as the number mentioned in the Register contains children, the latter account is most probably incorrect. This devastation is certainly appalling, when the amount of population at the commencement of the calamity is considered, which amount has generally been stated at 330. From the number of families visited by the plague, mentioned in the subsequent letter of Mompesson, it would, I opine, be nearer the mark, to say 350, or perhaps a few more. The number of deaths taken from the latter amount would leave 91. But a many fled at the first appearance of the distemper; some of whom never returned. Bradshaws, the then most wealthy family in the village, left it with precipitation, and never came back. A family of the name of Furness, took refuge at Farnsley, or Foundley, a farmhouse, about a mile from Eyam. Mr. Richard

* De Spiritualibus Pecci.

Furness, the poet, a native of Eyam, and the present schoolmaster of Dore, near Sheffield, is a lineal descendant of that family. A man of the name of Merrill, who lived at the Hollins-House, Eyam, built a hut on Eyam Moor, and resided therein until the plague abated. A hut was built a little beyond Riley by a family named Cotes, who dwelt there during that terrible time. The little dale that runs up to Foundley was nearly full of huts, built under the projecting rocks. There were others in the Cussy dell; and on various parts of the Moor the remains of these fugitive residences have existed till very lately. Mom-pesson's children, as we have seen, were sent away, and many others undoubtedly, who would not return for some time after the plague. Hence we may conclude, that there would be but very few left of those who tarried within the precincts of the village; in fact, it is a very current tradition that, two dozen funeral cakes, were, for some years subsequent to the plague, sufficient for the whole village, inclusive of the few distant relatives of the deceased. And I may here add, that of all the desolating traces of that destructive malady, there is none which to the present day has been more generally talked of, than that the main street, from one end of the village to the other, was grown over with grass; and, it is said, that kingcups and other flowers grew in the very middle of the road. This, however, one would imagine, could hardly be the case in 1666; but more probably in 1667, and a few succeeding years. That the village was almost desolate there is no doubt; and in the following sublime language of Ossian, it may be said:—
“ There the thistle shook its lonely head : the moss

whistled to the wind. The fox looked out from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round its head."

The winter which succeeded the cessation of the pestilence was, by the very few who were left, wholly spent in burning the furniture of the pest houses, and likewise nearly all the bedding and clothing found in the village: reserving scarcely anything to cover their nakedness. The necessary articles of apparel were fumigated and purified; and every means that could be suggested, were taken to prevent the resurrection of the horrid pest. But, the awful dread of this deadly monster; the condition of the village at the termination of its ravages, will be best shown by giving, after the following letter of Mompesson's, a few very popular and authentic traditions of that unspeakable and agonizing time:—

"To John Beilby, Esq., ———, Yorkshire.

"Eyam, Nov. 20, 1666.

"DEAR SIR,—I suppose this letter will seem to you no less than a miracle, that my habitation is *inter vivos*. I have got these lines transcribed by a friend, being loth to affright you with a letter from my hands. You are sensible of my state, the loss of the kindest wife in the world, whose life was amiable and end most comfortable. She was in an excellent posture when death came, which fills me with assurances that she is now invested with a crown of righteousness. I find this maxim verified by too sad experience: *Bonum magis carendo quam fruendo cernitur*. Had I been as thankful as my condition did deserve, I might have had my dearest dear in my bosom. But now farewell all happy days, and God grant I may repent my sad ingratitude!

"The condition of the place has been so sad, that I persuade myself it *did exceed all history and example*. Our town has become a Golgotha, the place of a skull; and had there not been a small remnant, we had been as Sodom, and like to Gomorrah. My ears never heard such doleful lamentations—my nose never smelled such horrid smells, and my eyes never beheld such ghastly spectacles. Here have been 76 families visited within my parish, out of which 259 persons died. Now (blessed be

God) all our fears are over, for none have died of the plague since the eleventh of October, and the pest houses have been long empty. I intend (God willing) to spend this week in seeing all woollen clothes fumed and purified, as well for the satisfaction as for the safety of the country. Here have been such burning of goods that the like, I think, was never known. For my part, I have scarcely apparel to shelter my body, having wasted more than I needed merely for example. During this dreadful visitation, I have not had the least symptom of disease, nor had I ever better health. My man had the distemper, and upon the appearance of a tumour I gave him some chemical antidotes, which operated, and after the rising broke, he was very well. My maid continued in health, which was a blessing; for had she quailed, I should have been ill set to have washed and gotten my provisions. I know I have had your prayers; and I conclude that the prayers of good people have rescued me from the jaws of death. Certainly I had been in the dust, had not Omnipotence itself been conquered by holy violence.

"I have largely tasted the goodness of the Creator, and the grim looks of death did never yet affright me. I always had a firm faith that my babes would do well, which made me willing to shake hands with the unkind, froward world; yet I shall esteem it a mercy if I am frustrated in the hopes I had of a translation to a better place, and God grant that with patience I may wait for my change, and that I may make a right use of His mercies: as the one hath been tart, so the other hath been sweet and comfortable.

"I perceive by a letter from Mr Newby, of your concern for my welfare. I make no question but I have your unfeigned love and affection. I assure you, that during my troubles you have had a great deal of room in my thoughts. Be pleased, dear Sir, to accept of the presentments of my kind respects, and impart them to your good wife, and all my dear relations. I can assure you that a line from your hand will be welcome to your sorrowful and affectionate nephew,

"WILLIAM MOMPESSEON."

Thus wrote this affectionate spirit—thus he describes the sufferings of his flock, which sufferings, however, will be further and more fully detailed in the following traditions of this terrible calamity:—

When the plague broke out with such tremendous violence in the latter end of the summer of 1665, there lived in a humble straw-thatched cottage, a little west of the church, a very happy and

contented family, named Sydall: consisting of husband, wife, five daughters, and one son. The father, son, and four daughters, took the infection and died in the space of twenty-five days, in October, 1665; leaving the hapless mother and one daughter. The mother had now nothing to render her disconsolate case bearable but her only surviving daughter Emmot; a very modest and handsome village maid. Emmot had for some time, with her mother's approbation, received the fervent addresses of a youth named Rowland, who resided in Middleton Dale, about a mile south-east of Eyam. He had daily visited her and sympathized with her on the death of her father, brother, and four young sisters. Often and anxiously had she remonstrated with him on the danger of his visits; but nothing could deter him from nightly pacing the devoted village, until the death-breathing pest threatened total desolation to the surrounding country, if intercourse were allowed. The happy scene when Rowland and Emmot were to cast their lots together, had been appointed to take place at the ensuing wakes; and fervently did they pray that the pestilence would cease. The ring, the emblem of endless and unchanging love, had been presented by Rowland to his beloved Emmot; and by her it was treasured as the certain pledge of the fidelity of his love,—of the sincerity of his affection. Frequently would she retire into her chamber, and bring it forth from its sanctuary and place it on her finger; while her eyes sparkled with meaning,—while through those bright portals of her mind, came forth her thoughts in language more eloquent than words. Rowland was seen each morn hasting along the dale to his occupation. Lightsome were his steps; his whistling echoed

from rock to rock : and his soul glowed with all the charms of anticipated bliss. Thus this loving pair indulged in dreaming of future happiness ; thus they cherished the fond hope of connubial joy, on the very eve of separation !

Towards the latter end of April, 1666, the lovely Emmot was seized by the terrific pest, and hurried to her grave on the thirtieth of the same month. Rowland heard a brief rumour of the dreadful tidings and his hopes were scattered. The brand of general abhorrence with which he would be marked if he, at that period of the pestilence, attempted to venture into the deathful village, debarred him from ascertaining the fate of his Emmot. Often, however, would his love and dreadful anxiety urge him to cross the fearful bound—the horrible circle of death. But, to bring the pestilence home to his own family ; to incur the everlasting infamy of spreading so terrible a disease, with the almost certainty of death on his own part, happily deterred him, on each attempt, from entering the poisonous “ Upas vale.”

On one occasion, however, Rowland ascended a hill contiguous to Eyam ; and thence he looked over the silent village for hours. It was Sabbath eve,

“ But yet no Sabbath sound
Came from the village ;—no rejoicing bells
Were heard ; no groups of strolling youths were found,
Nor lovers loitering on the distant fells.
No laugh, no shout of infancy, which tells
Where radiant health and happiness repair ;
But silence, such as with the lifeless dwells
Fell on his shuddering heart and fixed him there,
Frozen with dreams of death and bodings of despair.”

WILLIAM AND MARY, HOWITT.

It was some time after the plague had ceased that Rowland summoned up sufficient courage to

enter the village, and to learn the fate of his Emmot. Glimmering hope and fearful apprehension alternately possessed his mind, as his faltering steps brought him to the verge of the village. He stood on a little eminence at the eastern entrance of the place, and glanced for a few moments around; but he saw no smoke ascend from the ivy-adorned chimnies—nothing but the sighing breeze broke the still expanse, and he felt chained to the spot by terror and dismay. At length he ventured into the silent village, but he suddenly stopped, looking as much aghast as if he had seen the portentous inscription which met the eye of Dante when the shade of Virgil led him to the porch of Erebus. He then passed slowly on, gazing intensely on the desolate blank. A noiseless gloom pervaded the lonely street; no human form appeared; no sound of life was heard; and Rowland exclaimed, “O! once happy village! thou art now a ruin, such as a mighty tempest leaves when it has swept away the beauties of a garden!” Filled with unspeakable amazement he looked on each silent cottage; a hollow stillness reigned therein, and,

“Horror round
Waved her triumphant wings o’er the untrodden ground.”
WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

Then towards the cot of his Emmot he bent his way. His direful forebodings increased with every step. As he approached the dwelling his heart swelled and beat with painful emotion; but ere he reached the place a solitary boy appeared and thus the sorrowful tidings told:—“Ah! Rowland, thy Emmot’s dead and buried in the Cussy Dell!” This sudden disclosure struck Rowland with unutterable grief; he clung to an adjoining wall, and

there stood awhile combating with feelings keen and unspeakable. At the death of Emmot, her mother, frantic with despair, fled to the Cussy Dell, and there dwelt with some fugitive relatives. Rowland, after some time, proceeded to take a last farewell of the abode of his Emmot; the once happy place where he had spent so many happy hours. He reached the threshold, over which the grass grew profusely; the half-open door yielded to his hand, and he entered the silent dwelling filled with unimaginable sensations. On the hearth and floor the grass grew up from every chink; the tables and chairs in their usual places stood: the pewter plates and pans with rust were flecked; and the once sweet warbling linnet in its cage was dead. Rowland wept as he left the tenantless dwelling; his dreadful apprehensions were verified; and until death closed his eyes at a very old age, he frequently dropped a tear to the memory of his once lovely Emmot.

A young woman was married from Eyam to Corbor, about two miles distant, just before the breaking out of the plague. She left a mother in Eyam, who dwelt in a cottage alone, in great indigence. When the plague was making the greatest carnage, the old woman took the infection, and her daughter, unknown to her husband, came to see her, not knowing, however, that she was ill. Great was her consternation at finding her poor old mother writhing in dreadful agonies. She returned to Corbor the same day, very much terrified at the horrid scenes she had witnessed in the village. On the succeeding night she was taken very ill, and her husband and neighbours became almost frantic with fear lest she should have brought the distemper from Eyam. The follow-

ing day she was a very deal worse, and before night all the terrific symptoms of the pest became manifest, and she expired in great pain on the second day of her illness. The village of Corbor was alarmed beyond description ; but, strange to say, no one else took the infection.*

Some few, in Eyam, who had the plague, recovered ; and the first was a Margaret Blackwell. The tradition says that she was about sixteen or eighteen years of age when she took the distemper ; and that her father and whole family were dead, excepting one brother, at the time of her sickness. Her brother was one morning obliged to go to the coalpit ; and he arose very early, cooked himself some bacon, and started, being certain, as he said, that he should find his sister dead when he came back. Margaret, almost dying with excessive thirst, got out of bed for something to drink ; and finding a small wooden piggin with something in which she thought was water, but which was the fat from the bacon which her brother had just cooked, she drank it all off, returned to bed again, and found herself soon after rather better. She, however, had not the least hope of surviving :—

“ But nature rallied, and her flame still burn’d—
Sunk in the socket, glimmer’d and return’d ;
The golden bowl and silver cord were sound ;
The cistern’s wheel revolved its steady round ;
Fire—vital fire—evolved the living steam,
And life’s fine engine pump’d the purple stream.”

FURNESS.

On her brother’s return he found her, to his great surprise, a very deal better ; she eventually

* There was a very bad fever (some say it was the plague) in Corbor in 1632, when a many died. There are some grave-stones in the vicinity with the initials J. C. A. C. and several others, dated 1632. These initials are supposed to relate to a family of the name of Cook.

recovered, and lived to a good old age. Drinking adventitiously the contents of the wooden piggin, has generally been considered the cause of her unexpected resuscitation.

Towards the latter end of the summer of the dreadful pest, a man of the name of Merrill, of the Hollins-house, Eyam, erected, as I have before noticed, a hut near the summit of Sir William, wherein he dwelt to escape the plague, having only a cock with him, which he had taken for a companion. In this solitary retreat they lived together for about a month, with nothing to cheer them but the wild bee wandering with merry song. Merrill would frequently, during this solitary sojourn, descend to a point of the hill from which he could glance over the fated place; but nothing could he perceive in the distance but the direful havoc of the awful scourge, as exhibited in the increasing graves in the fields of the village. One morning, however, his companion the cock, strutted from a corner of the hut into the heath, and after glancing about, sprang from the ground with flapping wings, nor stopped in its airy course until it arrived at its former residence, Hollins-house. Merrill pondered a day or two over the meaning of his companion's abrupt desertion, and at last he thus soliloquized:—"Noah knew when the dove went forth and returned not again that the waters had subsided, and that the face of the earth was dry." He, therefore, took up his altitudes and returned to his former residence, where he found his cock. The plague had abated, and Merrill and his cock lived many years together at the Hollins-house, after the pestilence was totally extinguished.

The helpless condition of the inhabitants of Eyam, in that dreadful season, may be seen from the following fact:—

A little west of Eyam, there resided, at a house called Shepherd's Hall, or Shepherd's Flat, a family of the name of Mortin, who suffered greatly during the plague. This family consisted of husband, wife, and one child; the wife being, however, when the plague broke out so fiercely in 1666, in an advanced state of pregnancy. There was another house very near to Mortin's, inhabited by a widow woman and some children, named Kempe; and the children of this woman had brought the infection to the Shepherd's Flat, by playing with the children of Eyam. When the time of Mortin's wife's pregnancy was expired no one would come near to assist on the occasion of giving birth to her child. She was very ill, and declared that without assistance she should die. Mortin, in the last extremity of despair, was compelled to assist in the act of parturition. The eldest child he had during the time shut up in a room, where it screamed and called out "daddy" and "mammy" incessantly, being almost petrified with fear. Very soon after, both children and mother took the distemper and died, and Mortin buried them successively with his own hands at the end of his habitation. The other family of Kempes all died, and Mortin was left the only human being at Shepherd's Flat, where he lived in solitude for some years after the plague. A greyhound and four cows were his companions; one of the cows he milked to keep the greyhound and himself. To such an extent did this horrible pest carry on human desolation, that hares, rabbits, and other kinds of game multiplied and overran the vicinity of Eyam; Mortin's greyhound could have gone out and brought in a hare in a few minutes, at any time of the day.

That the surrounding country was greatly alarmed at the devastation of the pest at Eyam, the following accounts are sufficient evidence :—

At the period of this dreadful malady, Tideswell, west of Eyam about five miles, was one of the principal market-towns in the Peak ; and it was frequented on the market-days by great numbers from the wide-scattered villages. The consternation into which those who regularly attended, as well as the inhabitants of the place, were thrown, by the appalling reports of the pestilence at Eyam, caused a watch to be appointed at the eastern entrance of Tideswell, to question all who came that way, and to prevent any one from Eyam from passing on any business whatever. A woman who dwelt in that part of Eyam called Orchard Bank, was, during the greatest carnage of the pest, compelled by some pressing exigency to go to the market at Tideswell ; knowing, however, that it would be impossible to pass the watch if she told whence she came ; she therefore had recourse to the following stratagem. The watch, on her arrival, thus authoritatively addressed her :—" Whence comest thou ?" " From Orchard Bank," she replied. " And where is that ?" the watch asked again ; " Why, verily," said the woman, " it is in the land of the living." The watch, not knowing the place, suffered her to pass ; but she had scarcely reached the market when some person knew her, and whence she came. " The plague ! the plague ! a woman from Eyam ! the plague ! a woman from Eyam !" immediately resounded from all sides ; and the poor creature terrified almost to death, fled as fast as she possibly could. The infuriated multitude chased her at a distance, for near a mile out of the market-place ; and pelted her with volleys

of stones, mud, sods, and other missiles. She returned to Orchard Bank, bruised and otherwise worse for her daring prevarication. The dread of this infectious disease, as manifested in the case of this woman, and in the institution of keeping watch in the approximate villages, is no ways marvellous; for, in the accounts of the constables of Sheffield, there is the following item:—"Charges about keeping people from Fullwood Spring (ten miles from Eyam) at the time the plague was at Eam." Fuel was an article which the inhabitants had to encounter great difficulties in obtaining; those who fetched it from the coal-pits had to make circuitous routes, and represent themselves as coming from other places. One man on this journey unthinkingly let it slip that he came from Eyam, on which he was greatly abused and driven back, with his horses unladen. In a will of a Mr. Rowland Mower, Eyam, made when the plague was at its greatest height, there is, as near as can be recollected, the following allusion to the almost certainty of death of the whole population:—"Inasmuch as a great calamity has befallen the town, or village of Eyam; as death has already entered my dwelling; as all are in daily expectation of death; and as I humbly consider myself on the verge of eternity, I therefore, while in sound mind, thus give and bequeath, as hereafter noted, my worldly effects."

The dreadful panic which the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages experienced, by any one venturing therefrom to Eyam, may be sufficiently seen by the following singular and well authenticated fact:—

During the plague, a man who lived at Bubnel, near Chatsworth, named ———, an ancestor of

Mr. W. Howard, Barlow, had either to come to Eyam, or pass through Eyam, with a load of wood, which he was in the habit of carrying from the woods at Chatsworth, to the surrounding villages. His neighbours fervently remonstrated with him before his departure, on the impropriety and danger of going near Eyam; being, however, a fine, robust man, he disregarded their admonitions, and proceeded to Eyam with the wood. The day turned out very wet and boisterous; and as no one would accompany him to assist in unloading the wood, great delay was thereby occasioned. A severe cold was the result, and shortly after his arrival at home, he was attacked with a slight fever. The neighbours became exceedingly alarmed at his indisposition; they naturally concluded that he had taken the infection; and they were so incensed at his daring and dangerous conduct, that they threatened to shoot him if he attempted to leave his house. A man was appointed to watch and give the alarm if he crossed his own threshold. The consternation of the inhabitants of Bubnel and neighbouring places, excited the notice of the Earl of Devonshire, who had, either at his own request or otherwise, the particulars of the case laid before him. The Noble Earl, being anxious that no unnecessary alarm should be excited, reasoned with the persons who waited on him from Bubnel, on the impropriety of rashly judging because the man was ill, it was necessarily the plague. He told them to go back, and he would send his Doctor the next day at a certain hour to examine into the nature of the man's illness. The interview, either at the suggestion of the Earl, or from the Doctor's fear, was appointed to take place across the river Derwent, which flows close by Bubnel.

At the appointed time, the Doctor took his station on the eastern side of the river, where it makes a bend, which, on this and other accounts, made the distance to the sick man's appointed station greater. A sentinel informed the man of the arrangement, and he descended, well wrapped up, to the western side of the river. The affrighted neighbours looked on from a distance, while the Doctor interrogated the sick man at great length. The Doctor at last pronounced him free from the disorder; prescribed him some medicine; and the man, who was then much better, soon recovered.*

Mompesson left Eyam in 1669, three years after the plague; but the horrors which it had disseminated, had extended even to Eakring in Nottinghamshire, and to the time of his leaving Eyam for the living of that place. This benefice was presented to him by his friend and patron, Sir George Saville. On his going to take possession of the living of Eakring, the inhabitants refused admitting him into the village; in consequence of their terrors of "the cloud and whirlwind of death," in which he had walked. A little house or hut was therefore erected for him in Rufford Park, where he resided in seclusion until their fears died away. Such was the horror of that desolating infection; such was the dreadful impressions which it created even in far more distant places. Having now given, very imperfectly indeed, a few of the traditions of this awful time, I shall proceed to commit to paper the details of the rapid extinction of the Talbots and Hancocks, of Riley: two families who were carried off by the plague with horrid dispatch; and whose brief transition from health to sickness, from

* The Doctor's prescription is now in the hands of Dr. Nicholson, son-in-law of Mr. W. Howard, Barlow.

sickness to death, was attended with circumstances never before experienced.

“ O ! reader ! reader ! had we been
Spectators of the real scene.”

S. T. HALL.

Riley Graves are about a quarter of a mile eastward of Eyam, on the top, or rather on the slope of a hill, the base of which partially terminates in Eyam. These mountain *tumuli* are generally known to be the burial places of the Hancock family during the plague. Perhaps there is no place capable of producing such peculiar and serious impressions ; such sedate, venerable, and unspeakable sensations. These insulated memorials of the hapless sufferers, viewed with the surrounding scenery, give a tone to the feelings as pathetic as inexpressible. All the lighter emotions of the heart are chained down in prostrate abeyance : we feel as if we were holding communion with the spirits who murmur a saddening requiem to pleasure and frolicsome gaiety. All seems so hallowed : so over-shadowed, and so deeply imbued with solemnity. Were I competent to describe the impressive scenery of Riley Graves, it would be only a work of supererogation ; seeing that it has already received the deeply impassioned strokes and the heart-softening touches of the elegant authors of “ Peak Scenery,” and “ Rambles in Derbyshire : ” therefore I shall proceed to give the details of the almost total extinction of the family of Hancock, and the sole extinction of that of Talbot—the two families who resided at Riley at the commencement of the desolation of Eyam ; with a particular notice of the places of their interment ; and (as is indispensably necessary in this work) a brief description of the surrounding scenery.

Those who have visited Riley Grave Stones

have unavoidably noticed, about fifty yards from the enclosed cemetery, a small ash tree, it stands in a north-east direction of the stones, and it was a few yards south of this tree where stood the habitation of the Hancocks. There is not the least remains of that dwelling to be seen at this day; the disconsolate mother, after burying her husband and six children, as hereafter described, deserted it; and it was sometime after carried away to repair the neighbouring fences. The house in which the Talbots lived was about two hundred and fifty yards west or rather north-west of that of Hancocks; the present Riley-farm house is built on its site. The Manchester road to Sheffield passed, in those days, close by this house, and Talbots, being blacksmiths, had a smithy adjoining the house, and close to the road. Besides this occupation, they farmed part of Riley old land, and Hancocks the other. The Talbot family consisted of Richard, his wife, three sons, and three daughters: one son, however, had left Riley, and lived at some distance, before the commencement of the plague, in his own family, and therefore escaped. The high and airy situation of Riley, one would imagine, ought to have operated against the distemper; and being besides a full quarter of a mile from Eyam, the two families were not compelled to have any communication with the inhabitants thereof. How or by what means this subtle agent of death, found the way to Riley, is not now known; most probably some of the Talbot family brought it from Eyam, as they all perished before the infection, or at least before the death of any one of the Hancocks. The pestilence had raged full ten months in Eyam, before the Talbots of Riley were visited by this deathful messenger.

On the fifth of July, 1666, died Briget and Mary, daughters of Richard and Catherine Talbot, of Riley. They were young and beautiful : they had sported with innocence and mirth on the flowery heath only a few days before death came and laid his cold, chilly hand on their lovely bosoms. Often had they roved on the neighbouring moors, with hearts swelling with joy, and pure as the snow of their mountains : ah ! they had spent full many a sunny day, in chasing the many-hued butterfly, amidst the busy hum of the wild and toilsome bees ; and then, like two sweet roses just bursting into bloom, they were suddenly plucked from their lonely, parent bed. Thus these two lovely girls fell victims to the horrid pest ; thus they reluctantly stooped beneath death's fearful arch in one sad, direful day. Their weeping and terrified father immediately committed them to the earth beside his mournful home. On the seventh of the same month, he performed the same awful task on Ann, another of his hapless daughters ; and on the eighteenth, on his wife Catherine. Robert, his son, died, and was buried on the twenty-fourth, and on the ensuing day, the father himself died and was buried, leaving one son, who on the thirtieth died also, and was buried, probably by the Hancocks, on the same day. Thus, from the fifth to the thirtieth of July, perished the whole of the household of the fated Talbots of Riley. They were interred nearly together, close by their habitation ; and in the orchard of the present Riley-house, a dilapidated tabular monument, with the following very nearly erased inscription, records their memories :—" Richard Talbot, Catherine his wife, 2 sons, and 3 daughters, buried July, 1666."

The pest now passed on to the habitation of the Hancocks, where the work of death commenced by the infection of John and Elizabeth, son and daughter of John and Elizabeth Hancock. On the third of August, only three days from the death of the last of the Talbots, they both died, and were buried at a little distance from their cottage, by the hands of their distracted mother. Although her husband and two other sons survived four days after the first victims, yet tradition insists that the mother of this family buried them herself, altogether unassisted. John, her husband, and two sons, William and Oner, now sickened of this virulent malady. She became frantic; she saw that the whole family were destined to the same fate as the Talbots, and she wrung her hands in bitter despair. In the night of the sixth, Oner died, and her husband a few minutes after, and before morning, William gave his last struggling gasp. Can imagination conceive anything so appalling as the case of this suffering woman: on the third she buried a son and daughter, and in the night of the following sixth, she closed the eyes of her husband and two other sons. How awful her situation; being far from any other dwelling; not a soul to cheer her sinking spirits; not a being to cast her sorrowing eyes upon, save her two surviving children, whose lamentations were carried afar on the startled morning breeze. Such was the terrible night of the sixth of August, to this woful woman; often she ran to the door and called out in agony for help; then turning in again she fell on her knees, and

“ With hands to heaven out-spread,
Her frequent, fervent, orisons she said,
In loud response her childrens’ voices rise,
And midnight’s echo to their prayer replies.”

LUCIEN BONAPARTE.

The beams of the following morning's sun fell on the shallow graves which she had made for her husband and two sons. Dreading to touch the putrid bodies, she, as she had done by the other, tied a towel to their feet, and dragged them on the ground in succession to their graves. Hapless woman, surely no greater woe, ever crushed a female heart.

The end of two short days, from the seventh to the ninth, saw her again digging another grave amongst the blooming heath for her daughter Alice. On the morning of the next day, the tenth, Ann, her only child left at home, sunk and breathed her last. Thus

"each morn that rose,
Her grief redoubled, and renewed her woes."

LUCIEN BONAPARTE.

She consigned her to a grave beside her brothers and sisters; weeping in tears of sorrow until the fountains of grief became as dry as the sands of the desert. A few days after the death of her last child, she left her habitation at Riley, and went to an only son who had been, some years before the plague, bound an apprentice in Alsop-fields, Sheffield; with whom she spent the remainder of her sorrowful days. It was this son who erected the tomb and stones to the awful memory of his fated family; and it was one of his descendants, a Mr. Joseph Hancock, who, about the year 1750, discovered, "or rather recovered," in Sheffield, the art of plating goods.*

The houses in the top part of Stoney Middleton are nearly on a level with Riley-Graves; divided by two dells or narrow dales. The inhabitants of these houses, according to a very popular tradition, watched with profound awe the mother of the

* Vide Rhodes' Peak Scenery.

Hancocks, morning after morning digging the graves for her husband and children; and dragging them on the ground from their dwelling, and burying them therein. Awful and terrible scene. Did they not in imagination hear her audibly exclaim with the holy prophet? "Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night."

It has been observed by some writers that Riley, or Riley-graves, was the general burial place of the victims of the plague; this is, however, a mistake: none was buried there but the Talbots and Hancocks. The Talbots I have never seen noticed by any writer. Six head-stones and a tabular tomb record the memories of the Hancocks. The site of the graves was originally on the common or moor, on the verge of which was the dwelling of the Hancocks. That part of the common was afterwards inclosed, and the stones, which lay horizontally and marked precisely the places of the graves, were placed in an upright position, and somewhat nearer together. Thomas Birds, Esq., Eyam, an highly inestimable character, and profound antiquarian, caused these memorials to be put in a better state of preservation. He purchased the ground whereon they lay; but, since his death, or just before, it became the property of Thomas Burgoine, Esq., of Edensor, who for the better security of those relics of the plague, has removed them still nearer each other, and erected a wall round them in the form of a heart. It is hoped that the owner will prevent any further change in the situation of these sacred stones. On the top of the tomb there is the following inscription and quaint rhymes:—

"John Hancock, sen., Buried August 7, 1666.

Remember man
 As thou goest by,
 As thou art now,
 Even once was I;
 As I doe now
 So must thou lie,
 Remember man
 That thou must die."

On the four sides of the tomb are the words—
 Horam, Nescitis, Orate, Vigilate. On the head-
 stones the inscriptions are as follows :—

Elizabeth Hancock, Buried Aug. 3, 1666.

John Hancock, Buried Aug. 3, 1666.

Oner Hancock, Buried Aug. 7, 1666.

William Hancock, Buried Aug. 7, 1666.

Alice Hancock, Buried Aug. 9, 1666.

Ann Hancock, Buried Aug. 10, 1666.

It is impossible for the tourist to describe his feelings fully and minutely when he visits this hal-
 lowed and lonely place; he beholds, in the lan-
 guage of Ossian, "green tombs with their rank
 whistling grass; with their stones of mossy heads;"
 and his soul becomes suddenly overcharged with
 grave and solemn emotions. The scenery around
 these rude and simple monuments of eventful mor-
 tality, is highly picturesque; and adds greatly to
 the impressiveness of the sensations which a visit
 to this place invariably creates. Standing within
 this paling we behold to the left a long range of
 sable rocks sheltering the ancient villages of Cor-
 bor and Calver. Farther on, Chatsworth meets
 our view, and forms a conspicuous object in the
 prospect. This costly mansion, surrounded by
 such wide contrasting objects, has an unique effect:
 it has a magic-like appearance. Proud Masson is
 seen in the dim distance holding imperial sway
 over a thousand lesser hills. To the right we
 glance on the plain tower of Eyam church rising
 above the ivy-adorned cottages in rural magnifi-
 cence. Lovely village, amidst thy dells we hear

the muses of thy living and departed minstrels in sweet communion sing. Still farther on we see the peaks of endless hills, where the winding, classic Cressbrook flows,—the minstrel Newton's Arethuse. And behind, plantations of young trees are richly commingled with purple-blooming heather. Such are a few of the most prominent objects viewed from Riley-graves—"The Mountain Tumuli," where heath-bells bloom—where nestling fern and rank grass grow—where lone and still,

"Their green and dewy graves, the unconscious sufferers fill."
WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

One hundred and seventy-six years have now transpired since this unequalled and dreadful visitation; and, therefore, many of the stones which told of the calamities of Eyam, have been destroyed. In order that the future inhabitants of Eyam may be enabled to point out to the tourist most of the places where the ashes of the sufferers repose, I shall describe in a few following pages all the places where stones have been known to exist; where bones and bodies have been found; and where the still existing few memorials may be seen.

In the Cossy-dell there were, about fifty years ago, two or three grave-stones to the memory of a portion, or the whole, of a family of the name of Ragge; and the Register mentions four persons of that name who died of the plague. These stones have either been broken or carried away. It was the last of these memorials which is the theme of the short and beautiful poem, entitled "The Tomb of the Valley;" written a few years ago by Richard Furness.

At the Shepherds-Flat some stones existed until

very lately, to the memories of the Mortins and Kempes ; two families who perished by the plague, with the solitary exception, as we have before seen, of one individual. These memorials, after having marked for more than a century and a half, the precise places where the mortal remains of the sufferers of Shepherd's-Flat were deposited, have been destroyed by some late barbarian occupants of that secluded place. Bretton, about a mile north of Eyam, was visited by the plague ; and a many grave-stones once recorded the names of those who died. A few still remain. The victims were of the families of Mortin, Hall, and Townsend. One of these sufferers was buried in Bretton-Clough, and a round stone still covers the grave, but without any inscription. In Eyam-edge some grave-stones were once seen near to the house now belonging to Mr. I. Palfreyman ; but they have disappeared long ago. Behind, or rather at the west-end of some dwellings, now recognised as the Poor-houses, one or two of these stones which are said to have recorded the deaths of some persons of the name of Whitely, have been of late demolished. In a field adjoining the back part of the house occupied by Mr. J. Rippon, Eyam, one of these "melancholy tablets of mortality" once existed. That part of Eyam called the Townend was, about eighty years ago, bestrewed with these calamitous memoranda. Some have served for the flooring of houses and barns ; while others have been broken up for numerous purposes. The house and barn contiguous to the Miners' Arms Inn was built on a small plot of ground which contained the unconsecrated graves of a whole family at least. The stones which commemorated the untimely fate of these sufferers were sacrilegiously broken when

the present building was erected. A piece of waste land at the east end of the village, now forming a part of Slinn's Croft, must, from the number of monumental stones it once contained, have been the general place of interment for a many families. Some of these humble tablets were inscribed with a single H; probably the initial of Heald: the name of a family of whom a many perished. This brief and simple inscription is, however, equally as applicable to two other families of the names of Halksworth and Hadfield, who might inter their deceased members in this place. One of these stones, still existing, is to the memory of a woman of the name of Talbot; and others were commemorative of many other persons of various names. These mournful memorials, with their serious and impressive records, are now, with one single exception, no longer seen. They have been wantonly and unnecessarily destroyed; and, principally, (as I am informed,) by a man, from whose pretension to classical attainments, something different might have been expected. A want of becoming veneration for the remains of those unparalleled sufferers; an utter absence of a due sense of feeling, must ever be the degraded characteristics of that being who has lent a hand to destroy those simple monuments of the greatest moral heroes that ever honoured and dignified mankind! The inhabitants of Eyam ought to have vied with each other in the preservation of every relic of the eventful fate of the victims of the plague; the ground in which their ashes are laid, ought to have been for ever undisturbed; and the tablets which told the story of their calamities guarded as much as possible, even from the defacing hand of time. Alas! alas! such has not

been the case: nearly all the humble stones which were laid to perpetuate their memories have been demolished.

“ Ah! There no more
The green graves of the pestilence are seen;
O'er them the plough hath pass'd; and harvests wave,
Where haste and horror flung th' infectious corse.”

ELLIOTT.

The following are, however, the few stones that still remain:—

Besides Mrs. Mompesson's tomb there is another in the church-yard, but the inscription is now obliterated; yet I believe it was erected to the memory of a person of the name of Rowland, who died of the plague in 1666. The Register mentions several of this name, who were carried off during that awful time. In a field behind the church, known as Blackwell's Edge-field, there are two stones with the following inscriptions:—“ Margaret Teyler, 1656;” “ Alies Teyler, 1666.” According to the Register, Margaret was buried July 14, 1666; and Alies was one of the last who perished by the hand of the pest. Nearly the whole of this family died of the distemper, although there is no mention of any other on the present existing stones. It appears, however, that the father, mother, and children of this family, died at long intervals, considering the sweeping, sudden, and awful desolation.

In a field adjoining Froggatt's factory, there is an old dilapidated tabular tomb, with H. M. inscribed on one end. These letters are the initials of Humphrey Merrill, who was buried there on the 9th of September, 1666. In the parson's field, in the Lydgate, Eyam Townend, two gravestones are laid nearly parallel to each other, containing the following records:—“ Here lye buried George

Darby, who dyed July 4th, 1666;" "Mary, the daughter of George Darby, dyed September 4th, 1666." The house in which this family dwelt is supposed to have been contiguous to their graves. There is a tradition that this lovely young maiden was extremely beautiful and engaging; that she was frequently seen in the adjoining flowery fields; that she was suddenly seized by the terrific pest while gathering flowers in the field of her father's sepulchre; and that she lingered only one short day before she was laid beneath the daisy-sods, beside her father's grave. How sudden the change. Homer's beautiful simile on the death of Euphorbus, may be applied with equal felicity to the fate of this hapless young maiden:—

"As the young olive, in some sylvan scene,
Crown'd by fresh fountains with eternal green,
Lifts the gay head, in snowy flowerets fair,
And plays and dances to the gentle air;
When lo! a whirlwind from high heav'n invades
The tender plant, and withers all its shades;
It lies uprooted from its genial bed,
A lovely ruin, now defaced and dead."

A stone in the possession of Mr. John Slinn, of the King's Arms Inn, Eyam, has the following inscription: "Briget Talbot, Ano. Dom. 1666." She was the wife of Robert Talbot, clerk, and was buried on the fifteenth of August, 1666. The stone was found in a small piece of ground, now forming, as aforementioned, part of Slinn's croft, and it is hoped that this memorial of the desolation of Eyam, will be preserved, which I am happy to state, there is no doubt. This Robert Talbot was in holy orders, but where he officiated, or whether he ever exercised the sacred functions or not, I am not able to affirm. The house in which he resided is known to this day as the Parson's house. These

calamitous tablets, with those at Riley, are all that now bear testimony of the plague at Eyam. Many have been destroyed, and probably a many more are buried beneath the surface of the gardens and fields of the village.

Within the present generation several human skeletons and other remains of the victims of the plague have been discovered in various parts of the village. In making some alterations in some buildings opposite the school, about twenty years ago, three skulls and other bones were found. From the position of the skulls, the bodies appeared to have been laid side by side, very near each other, and what was most particularly observed was, that the teeth were extremely white and perfect. The jaws of all the skulls had the requisite number of teeth, which were most remarkably sound. On making the new road from the Dale to the Town-end, fifteen years ago, a human skeleton, lying at full length, was found in a garden. It measured nearly six feet, and the teeth, as in the above case, were equally perfect. The skeleton, on account of the stature, was supposed to be that of a young man, and the whiteness and soundness of the teeth, were most probably owing to his being at the time of death in the vigour of life. An old house, opposite the Church, was pulled down a few years ago, when a human skeleton was found under the parlour floor. Two or three grave-stones, which had in part paved the same room, were destroyed at the same time. A very many persons can recollect having seen the stones, but all have forgot the particular inscriptions. In an old house on the Cross, now occupied by J. Wilson, miller, some human bones were found in removing part of the kitchen floor. There was a grave-stone, if not

some part of a human skeleton, once found in a field which is now called Phillip's sitch. In a cleft of the rocks in the dale side, some bones were found a many years since, by Mr. Samuel Hall, Eyam. These bones were undoubtedly the remains of some person or persons deposited there at the time of the plague. In the Dale, very near the Hanging Fat, some bones have been dug up. There is no doubt whatever, that the remains of the plague's victims are scattered far and wide in and around the village. By way of concluding this doleful subject, it may be proper to notice a few particulars respecting the still existing difference of opinion concerning the respective merits of Mompesson and Stanley, in the happy influence exercised over the villagers of Eyam, during their awful calamity.

It is insisted by a few, that Stanley exerted himself in mitigating the sufferings of the inhabitants of Eyam during the plague, to a far greater degree than Mompesson; that he was the principal means of preventing the contagion from spreading to the neighbouring villages; that the fame of Mompesson has cast an undue shade over the lofty virtues of his pious predecessor; and that, for this and other reasons, the venerable and conscientious Stanley has not had justice done to his memory. Without wishing to detract anything from the merits of Mompesson, I must confess that there are grounds for suspecting that Stanley has not had that justice done him which he so deservedly merited. It is lamentable that such should have been the case; yet I believe, although there is no particular clue to the motives of the persons by whom his name has been kept back, that it will scarcely admit of doubt. The following extract from Bagshaw's

Spiritualibus Peccis, quoted by Calamy, in his *Lives of the Nonconformists*, sufficiently corroborates what is here advanced:—"When he (Stanley) could not serve his people publicly, he was helpful to them in private. Some persons yet alive will testify how helpful he was to his people when the pestilence prevailed in Eyam, that he continued with em when, AS IT IS WRITTEN, 259 persons of ripe age and 58 children were cut off thereby. When some who might have been better employed moved the then Noble Earl of Devonshire, Lord Lieutenant, to remove him out of the town, I am told by the creditable that he said, 'It was more reasonable that the whole country should in more than words testify their thankfulness to him, who, together with the care of the town, had taken such care AS NO ONE ELSE DID, to prevent the infection of the towns adjacent.'"^{*} The well-known veracious character of the venerable Apostle of the Peak, gives to his testimony the weight of indubitable truth. And I may here add, that the memory of Stanley amongst the inhabitants of Eyam is, to the present day, greatly revered and deservedly cherished. By some he is invariably designated as, **THE GREAT GOOD MAN**. He died at Eyam in the year 1670, "satisfied to the last in the cause of Nonconformity." The house in which he lived was, until it was pulled down, called Stanley's house. Tradition gives to this honourable character all the glowing virtues of the **MAN OF ROSS**:

"And what! no monument, inscription, stone?
His race, his form, his name almost unknown."—**POPE**.

^{*} The Author, notwithstanding his appeal to some written testimony, is certainly mistaken as to the number who died of the plague.

This highly exalted character of Stanley must not be supposed to detract in the least from that of the benevolent Mompesson. No; Mompesson's memory is richly worthy of all the admiration with which it has been honoured. The living of Eyam was presented to him on the death of Sherland Adams, in 1664; only one year before the first breaking out of the plague. From the following passage in his letter to his uncle, J. Beilby, Esq., —, Yorkshire, he appears to have been dissatisfied with his situation at Eyam :—" Had I been so thankful as my situation did deserve, I might have had my dearest dear in my bosom—God grant that I may repent my sad ingratitude!"—He seems, however, to have known with Seneca, that " Virtue is that perfect good, which is the complement of a happy life; the only immortal thing that belongs to mortality." His virtue was not contemplative, but active: and it must be remembered, that this divine property is never so glorious as when exhibited in extremities. What a sublime sentiment he gave to the world in the following words, in his letter to Sir George Saville :—" I am not desirous that they (his children) should be great, but good;" and he then adds, " my next request is, that they may be brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord." When he considered himself on the verge of eternity, he thus in the purest spirit of philanthropy addresses his patron :—" I desire, Sir, that you will make choice of a humble, pious man to succeed me in my parsonage; and could I see your face before my departure hence, I would inform you in which manner I think he may live comfortably amongst his people, which would be some satisfaction to me before I die." In another

part he says : " Never do any thing upon which you dare not first ask the blessing of God." Such were the requisitions and holy admonitions of this admirable minister of Christ. His high sense of duty was made strikingly manifest on the following occasion. The Deanery of Lincoln was generously offered him ; but he humbly declined accepting it in favour of a friend, whom he sincerely esteemed : Dr. Fuller, not the author of " The British Worthies." How noble ! how disinterested ! was this Christian-like act of friendship. He, however, in addition to the Rectory of Eakring, accepted of the Prebends of York and Southwell. He married for his second wife Mrs. Nuby, relict of Charles Nuby, Esq., who bore him two daughters. He died at Eakring, the 7th of March, 1708, in the 70th year of his age. A brass plate, with a Latin inscription, marks the place in the Church at Eakring where his ashes repose.

Of this man, Miss Seward thus emphatically observes :—" His memory ought never to die ! it should be immortal as the spirit that made it worthy to live."

And is it not gratifying to the villagers of Eyam, to know that the place of their humble residence has been honoured by the deeds of such a disinterested, benevolent, and exalted character as Mompesson ? The conduct of this ever-to-be-admired man was a pure emanation from the heart of a Christian in spirit and truth. And while France glories in the name of the good Bishop of Marseilles, England shall exult in her transcendent rival—Mompesson, the village pastor of Eyam !*

* It would be doubly gratifying, had there been some honourable mention of Stanley by Mompesson, in one or all of his letters.

It is lamentable that so little is known of the descendants of this worthy and dignified character. In Miller's "History of Doncaster," his son, George Mompesson, is mentioned as witness to an indenture, connected with the establishment of a library, in 1736, at Doncaster church. This said George Mompesson was rector of Barnborough, Yorkshire; he married Alice, daughter of John Broomhead, schoolmaster of Laughten-en-le-Morthen. She is buried in Barnborough church; and a Latin inscription distinguishes her grave: she died on the 16th of October, 1716, aged 47 years. Another inscription records the death of John, the son of George and Alice Mompesson, rector of Hassingham; he died on the 2nd of January, 1722, aged 32 years. Few or no descendants of this family are now left.*

"In the summer of 1751," writes Miss Seward, "five cottagers were digging on the heathy mountain above Eyam, which was the place of graves after the church-yard became too narrow a repository. The men came to something which had the appearance of having once been linen. Conscious of their situation, they instantly buried it again. In a few days, they all sickened of a putrid fever, and three of the five died. The disorder was contagious, and proved mortal to numbers of the inhabitants. My father, who was the Canon of Lichfield, resided in that city with his family, at the period when the subtle, unextinguished, though much-abated power of the most dreadful of all diseases awakened from the dust, in which it had slumbered 91 years." After a most careful in-

* The name—*Mompesson*—is not English: and it is believed that the immediate ancestors of the worthy Rector of Eyam of that name, were foreigners.

quiry, I am almost certain that Miss Seward was mistaken; at least, as respects the date. That some linen or woollen cloth was dug up at Riley, some very old persons have some faint recollection; but it could not be in 1757, and have produced such effects as Miss Seward describes; as the mortality in that year was only ordinary. In the month of January, 1779, the weather was unusually warm; indeed, most remarkably so; and in the ensuing summer, a bad fever broke out, which carried off upwards of twenty of the stoutest persons in the village—chiefly men. This happened in the middle of the summer; and the flesh meat which the villagers had provided for the wakes, became tainted and green, in a most astonishing short time: so much so, that it was nearly all buried without being tasted. Those who died, swelled in the neck and groin; and the villagers apprehended that the terrible ghost of the plague had risen from the dust. This contagious fever after a while passed away. If it were not to this time that Miss Seward alludes, she was totally misinformed. In 1813, another fever made its appearance, and hurried a few to their graves, with great speed. On both these occasions, the desolation of Eyam, in 1666, was the theme of the whole village. It is singular that, even to this day, the villagers express their disapprobation of one another in the following phrases:—"The plague on thee," and "The plague take thee."

In the year 1766, the Rev. Mr. Seward preached a centenary sermon in the church of Eyam, in commemoration of the plague. The sermon was written with great descriptive power: it drew forth abundant tears from the sobbing auditors. It is hoped that in the year 1866, a se-

cond centenary sermon will be preached at the same place and on the same event.

I shall take but little notice of the several causes which the few survivors believed had brought down the plague on the village as a judgment. At the wakes preceding the first appearance of the pest, some few wanton youths are said to have driven a young cow into the church during divine service; and to this profane act the dreadful visitation was by some ascribed. A persecuted Catholic, of the name of Garlick, who was taken prisoner at Padley Hall, in the reign of Elizabeth, is said to have been much abused as he passed through Eyam, in custody, when he said something which has been, by some, construed into a prediction of the plague. These with other presumed causes of the awful scourge must be considered fanciful. The great omniscient Disposer of events in his wisdom permitted it; and we poor worms of creation must not pretend to know for what wise end it was intended; nor must we more presumptuously presume

“To teach eternal wisdom how to rule.”—POPE.

According to the Register, the following are the names of those who died of the plague, with the dates of their respective deaths. Their ages are not given. Some were young, as they are mentioned as being the children of such and such persons. I shall, for brevity's sake, only give the simple names:—

BURIED.	A.D.	BURIED.	A.D.
George Vicars, Sept. 7,	1665	Elizabeth Thorpe Oct. 1,	1665
Edward Cooper22	...	Margret Bands 3	...
Peter Halksworth23	...	Mary Thorpe 3	...
Thomas Thorpe26	...	Sythe Torre 6	...
Sarah Sydall30	...	William Thorpe 7	...
Mary Thorpe30	...	Richard Sydall11	...
Matthew Bands, Oct. 1	...	William Torre13	...

BURIED.	A.D.	BURIED.	A.D.
Alice Torre (his wife)		Jon. Thos. Willson,	
Oct. ...13, 1665		March —, 1666	
John Sydall14	...	John Talbot—	...
Ellen Sydall15	...	John Wood—	...
Humphrey Halksworth17	...	Mary Buxton, Foolow	
Martha Bands17	...	—	...
Jonathan Ragge... ..18	...	Ann Blackwell—	...
Humphrey Torre19	..	Alice Halksworth ...—, 1666	
Thomas Thorpe19	...	Thomas Allen, April 6	...
Mary Bands20	...	Joan Blackwell... ..6	...
Elizabeth Sydall22	...	Alice Thorpe15	...
Alice Ragge23	...	Edward Bainsley 15 or 16	...
Alice Sydall24	...	Margret Blackwell do.	...
George Ragge26	...	Samuel Hadfield18	...
Jonathan Cooper28	...	Margret Gregory21	...
Humphrey Torre30	...	— Allen (an infant) 28	...
Hugh Stubbs, Nov. 1	...	Emmot Sydal29, 1666	
Alice Teyler3	...	Robert Thorpe, May 2	...
Hannah Rowland ... 5	...	William Thorpe ... 2	...
John Stubbs15	...	James Teyler11	...
Ann Stubbs (his wife)19	...	Ellen Charlesworth ...24	...
Elizabeth Warrington 29	...	Isaac Thornley, June 2	...
Randoll Daniel30	...	Anna Thornley... ..12	...
Mary Rowland, Dec. 1	...	Jonathan Thornley ...12	...
Richard Coyle2	...	Anthony Skidmore ...12	...
John Rowbotham ... 9	...	Elizabeth Thornley ...15	..
— Rowe (an infant) 14	...	James Mower15	...
Mary Rowe15	...	Elizabeth Buxton ...15	...
William Rowe19	...	Mary Heald16	...
Thomas Willson22	...	Francis Thornley ...17	...
William Rowbotham...24	...	Mary Skidmore17	...
Anthony Blackwell ...24	...	Sarah Lowe17	...
Robert Rowbotham,		Mary Mellow18	...
Jan. 1, 1665-6		Anna Townsend19	...
Samuel Rowbotham... 1	...	Abel Archdale20	...
AbellRowland15	..	Edward Thornley ...22	...
John Thornley28	...	Ann Skidmore24	..
Isaac Willson28	...	Jane Townsend... ..25	...
Peter Mortin, Bretton		Emmot Heald26	...
Feb. 4	...	John Swanna29	...
Thomas Rowland ...14	...	Elizabeth Heald, July 2	...
John Willson15	...	William Lowe2	...
Deborah Willson ...17	...	Eleanor Lowe (his	
Alice Willson18	...	wife)3	...
Adam Halksworth .. 18	...	Deborah Ealott... ..3	...
Anthony Blackwell ...21	...	George Darby4	...
Elizabeth Abell... ..27	...	Anna Coyle5	...

BURIED.	A.D.	BURIED.	A.D.
Briget Talbot, Riley, July ... 5, 1666	...	Sarah Ealott31, 1666	...
Mary Talbot, Riley ... 5	...	Joseph Allen31	...
John Dannyell ... 5	...	Anst Martin, Bretton 31	...
Elizabeth Swanna ... 6	...	Robert Kempe, Shep- herd's Flat31	...
Mary Thornley . . . 6	...	George Ashe, ...Aug. 1	...
John Townsend ... 7	...	Mary Nealor 1	...
Ann Talbot (Riley) ... 7	...	John Hadfield 2	...
Francis Ragge 8	...	Robert Buxton 2	...
Elizabeth Thorpe ... 8	...	Ann Naylor 2	...
Elizabeth Lowe ... 9	...	Jonathan Naylor ... 2	...
Edytha Torre 9	...	Elizabeth Glover ... 2	...
Anne Lowe13	...	Alexander Hadfield .. 3	...
Margret Teyler... ..14	...	Jane Nealor 3	...
Alice Thornley... ..16	...	Godfrey Torre 3	...
Jane Naylor16	...	John Hancock, jun. ... 3	...
Edytha Barkinge ...17	...	Elizabeth Hancock .. 3	...
Elizabeth Thornley ...17	...	Margaret Buxton ... 3	...
Jane Talbot17	...	Robert Barkinge ... 3	...
Robert Whytely ...18	...	Margaret Percival ... 4	...
Catherine Talbot ...18	...	Ann Swinnerton ... 4	...
Thomas Heald18	...	Rebecca Mortin, Shep- herd's Flat 4	...
Robert Torre18	...	Robert French 6	...
George Short18	...	Richard Thorpe... .. 6	...
Thomas Ashe18	...	Thomas Frith 6	...
William Thornley ...19	...	John Yealot 7	...
Francis Wood22	...	Oner Hancock 7	...
Thomas Thorpe22	...	John Hancock 7	...
Robert Thorpe22	...	William Hancock ... 7	...
Robert Talbot24	...	Abram Swinnerton .. 8	...
Joan Nealor25	...	Alice Hancock 9	...
Thomas Healley ...25	...	Ann Hancock10	...
Richard Talbot25	...	Frances Frith10	...
John Nealor26	...	Elizabeth Kempe ...11	...
Joan Talbot26	...	William Halksworth 12	...
Ruth Talbot26	...	Thomas Kempe... ..12	...
Anna Chapman... ..26	...	Francis Bocking ...13	...
Lydia Chapman... ..28	...	Richard Bocking ...13	...
Margret Allen29	...	Mary Bocking13	...
John Torre29	...	John Tricket13	...
Samuel Ealott,29	...	Ann Tricket (his wife)13	...
Rowland Mower ...29	...	Mary Whitbey13	...
Thomas Barkinge ..30	...	Sarah Blackwall, Bret- ton13	...
Nicholas Whitby ...30	...	Brigett Naylor13	...
Jonathan Talbot ...30	...	Robert Hadfield ...14	...
Mary Whitby30	...		
Rowland Mower ...30	...		

BURIED.	A.D.	BURIED.	A.D.
Margaret Swinnerton	14, 1666	William Percival, Sept. 1,	1666
Alice Coyle	14	Robert Trickett...	2
Thurston Whitbey	15	Henry Frith	3
Alice Bocking	15	John Willson	4
Briget Talbot	15	Mary Darby	4
Michael Kempe... ..	15	William Abell	7
Ann Wilson	15	George Frith	7
Thomas Bilston.. ..	16	Godfrey Ashe	8
Thomas Frith	17	William Halksworth...	9
Joan French	17	Robert Wood	9
Mary Yealot	17	Humphrey Merril ...	9
Sarah Mortin, Shep-		Sarah Willson	10
herd's Flat	18	Thomas Mozley... ..	16
Elizabeth Frith...	18	Joan Wood... ..	16
Ann Yealot	18	Mary Percival	18
Thomas Ragge	18	Francis Mortin	20
Ann Halksworth ...	19	George Butterworth...	21
Joan Ashmore	19	Ann Townsend, Bret-	
Elizabeth Frith...	20	ton	22
Margaret Mortin ...	20	Ann Glover	23
Ann Rowland	20	Ann Hall	23
Joan Buxton	20	Francis Halksworth ...	23
Frances Frith	21	- Townsend, an infant	29
Ruth Mortin	21	Susanna Mortin...	29
— Frith, an infant	22	James Parsley ...Oct.	1
Lydia Kempe	22	Grace Mortin	2
Peter Hall, Bretton	23	Peter Ashe... ..	4
— Mortin, an infant	24	Abram Mortin	5
Catherine Mompesson.	25	Thomas Torre	—
Samuel Chapman ...	25	Benjamin Mortin ...	—
Ann Frith	25	Elizabeth Mortin ...	—
Joan Howe	27	Alice Teyler	—
Thomas Ashmore ...	27	Ann Parsley	—
Thomas Wood	28	Agnes Sheldon	—
William Howe	30	Mary Mortin	—
Mary Abell... ..	30	Samuel Hall	—
Catherine Talbot ...	30	Peter Hall	—
Francis Wilson	30	Joseph Mortin	—
Elizabeth Frith..	Sept. 1		

The number of these hallowed names is 267; but, as Mompesson states the precise number of the all-glorious self-martyrs to be 259, it is thought that eight out of the 267 died during the plague, but not of the plague. Tradition mentions this

to be the case in two or three instances. The Register gives no date from the fifth to the fifteenth of October, therefore it cannot be ascertained which of the two or three last mentioned deaths occurred on the eleventh of October: the date of the death of the plague's last victim. There appears to have been from the fifteenth to the last of October, six deaths out of the small remnant left; but the authority of Mompesson, for the cessation of the pestilence on the eleventh of October, must be conclusive and satisfactory. A very many of the victims of the same name, are distinguished from each other in the Register by stating their degrees of relationship;—this I have omitted, as before mentioned, to avoid tedious repetition and useless verbosity.

THE CHURCH.—This very plain fabric stands, as I have before noticed, nearly in the centre of the village: the churchyard wall on the south side, running parallel with, and close by, the principal street. It is a very simple edifice; quite in keeping with the scenery around. That there was a former church—perhaps as far back as Saxon times—is highly probable: indeed, there are a few relics about the present structure, strongly indicative of great antiquity. Almost every part of the building is comparatively modern; the north part is of the reign of Henry the Second; the south, or front part, of Elizabeth; the chancel was erected about the year A.D. 1600; and the tower was rebuilt about the same time. There is only one good window in the whole structure—it is at the east end of the north aisle, evidently of the fourteenth century. A few specimens of painted glass adorn this antique window.

It was a very small church previously to the ad-

dition of the chancel, which was erected by the Rev. Robert Talbot, Rector of Eyam, at the time afore-mentioned. The old tower, which was but small, was taken down, and the present one builded by a Madam Stafford, a maiden lady, one of the co-heiresses of Humphrey Stafford, Eyam. The grotesque figures projecting from the top part of the tower, belonged to the old tower; and from their defaced and dilapidated appearance, as compared with those on the Saxon churches of Hope and Tankersley, they must certainly have been *ornaments* of a church long anterior to the Norman Conquest. The tower is square, nearly sixty feet high, surmounted with small embattlements and four ornamented pinnacles, about five feet in length. Four rich and deep toned bells occupy the top part of the tower, where ten bells might be hung conveniently. The bells, which are said to have been given by Madam Stafford, are rich in material—containing much silver. They have the following inscriptions:—

1st.	JESVS	BEE	OVR	SPEED.	1619. c o.
2nd.	GOD	SAVE	HJS	CHVRCH.	1618. c o.
3rd.	JESVS	BE	OVR	SPEDE,	1618. c o.
4th.	JESWS	BE	OVR	SPEDE,	1628.

There are five bell frames, but never five bells, although there is a notion prevails that one was stolen and taken to Longstone, or elsewhere.— Nearly in the middle of the west side of the tower there is a stone something less than the adjoining stones, with the following letters, and something like figures inscribed thereon:—

C·W									
T	B	·	W	C	·	T	C	P	T
C	H	I	C	I	915	M	B	T	

This stone, amongst the *Solons* of the village, has been the source of numberless conjectures. The letters are evidently modern in character—not more than two centuries and a half old; the date of the erection of the tower. They are most probably the initials of the then Churchwardens; this is almost certain from the C. W. at the head of the other letters. What the figures mean is totally inexplicable; for it cannot be supposed that they mean A.D. 915. Some think they are not figures at all. As I have not given the inscription in the precise character of the letters, it would, therefore be recommendable to all who are interested in mystical inscriptions, to see it before they conclude concerning it from what is here advanced.*

Notwithstanding the architectural defects of the church, it has, however, one classical ornament that would add to the splendour of some of our magnificent cathedrals. It is the sun-dial, placed immediately over the principal doorway into the church. This complex piece of mathematical ingenuity, which is one of the finest of the kind in the kingdom, was delineated by Mr. Duffin, Clerk to — Simson, Esq., formerly a worthy magistrate of Stoke Hall, near Eyam. The workmanship and engraving are by the late Mr. William Shore, of Eyam, an ingenious stone-mason. The following is a brief description of its admirable contents, by an able hand at gnomonics:—"It is a vertical plane declining westward, and from certain mathe-

* It is the opinion of a many that this stone is of great antiquity. It evidently was either intended for a different situation, or it belonged to the old tower—if the latter, it is very old, notwithstanding the letters being so very perfect. In the *British Magazine* for 1832, vol. 2nd, there is a *fac simile* of the inscription.

mathematical principles connected with conic sections, the parallels of the sun's declination for every month in the year—a scale of the sun's meridian altitude—an azimuthal scale—the points of the compass, and a number of meridians are well delineated on the plane from the stereographic projection of the sphere.

“ The plane being large the horary scale is well divided ; the upper, or fiducial edge of the style is of brass, and an indentation therein representing the centre of the projection, casts the light or shade of its point on the hyperbolic curves and other furniture of the dial.” How lamentable that this noble work of genius should stand in its present neglected state ! Much of the exterior of the south side of this edifice is covered with ivy, which, if not immediately checked, will soon envelope the whole structure.

The interior consists of nave, chancel, and north and south aisles. The chancel is open to the body of the church only by an arch, which intercepts to some degree the intended and necessary connection. The modern erection of a south side gallery, and one of rather older date, at the western extremity, have lamentably destroyed the original architectural beauty of the church. Seven pointed arches, three on the north side, three on the south side, and one on the west end, supported by plain, octagonal, and clustered pillars, once adorned the interior of this edifice. Two only now visibly remain. How deplorable that the whims and fancies of some persons should be allowed to destroy the ornaments and designs of our pious and venerable forefathers.

An ancient stone font, lined with lead, occupies its wonted place ; and strongly reminds us of the

simplicity of past times. There are also a few relics of Catholic times. At the north-east extremity of the church, there are the remains of the Confessional. An aperture in the wall is still seen, through which, it is said, were whispered the confession of sins. And at the same place, a small stone projects from the wall, with a hollow or cavity for the holy-water. Some have imagined that there were another Confessional, or place of priestly officiation, on the opposite side of the church; but of this there is scarcely any trace; and, indeed, were it so, it would intimate that the church had at one time two priests, which is hardly probable. Of the monuments and other things of interest in the interior, there are but few of importance. On the top of the roof of the chancel, there is carved, in wood, a talbot, or dog, which is a supporter of the arms of the Earls of Shrewsbury, who were Lords of the Manor of Eyam, and patrons of the living. The inscription, J. B., 1595, F. B., may be seen on the front of the manorial seat: the letters are the initials of John Bradshaw and Francis Bradshaw. This family succeeded to the family mansion and part of the estate of the Staffords, who are supposed to be interred under the manorial pew. There is no monument, however, of this once influential family, which may be accounted for, through the church having been, in this and other parts, frequently altered; when, as no branch of the family dwelled at Eyam any length of time, after the death of the coheiresses of the last male of the Staffords, anything commemorative of their memories would probably be destroyed. The old manorial pew was remodelled and repaired by the Bradshaws.

In the chancel there is a mural monument, to

the memory of John Wright, gentleman, who was buried January 2d, 1694; and Elizabeth, his wife, buried August 22d, 1700. The inscription is surmounted by the family arms. Two others, to the ancestors and other relatives of M. M. Middleton, Esq. of Leam Hall. One to Ralph Rigby, curate of Eyam twenty-two years, buried April 22, 1740.* A brass plate, to the memory of A. Hamilton, Rector of Eyam, who was buried, October 21, 1717. The inscription is in Latin. Another brass plate commemorates the memory of Bernard, son of Bernard Wells, who died March 16th, 1648. An alabaster monument of great beauty perpetuates the memory of Mary, daughter of Smithson Green, Esq., Brosterfield, who died in May, 1777. In the vestry there is a brass plate to the memories of Charles Hargrave, Rector of Eyam, who died Nov. 18, 1822; and to his son William, who died Nov. 1st, 1816. A stone in an obscure corner records the death of Joseph Hunt, Rector of Eyam, who was buried December 16, 1709; and Ann, his wife, buried December 18th, 1703. In the manorial pew there is a brass plate, to the memory of John Galliard, who died April 29, 1745. On the opposite side of the pillar there is another, adorned with a death's head and cross bones, to the memory of John Willson, who died December 21, 1716. On the reading desk there is a plate to the memory of the Rev. Edmund Fletcher, who died Oct. 7th, 1745. These, with a few other slabs on the floor, are all of any moment in the

* The night of the funeral of this Rev. Divine was attended with the following singular occurrence:—Three clergymen, from Yorkshire, returning from the funeral, was lost on the East Moor in a snow, which fell after the setting of the sun. A shepherd found one on the following morning, and with difficulty animation was restored; the other two were dead when found.

church. There is one unassuming stone, however, laid flat in the chancel, simply inscribed with T. B., the initials of Thomas Birds, Esq., Eyam, of antiquarian notoriety: he died May 25th, 1828. The national arms; a full length figure of Aaron and Moses, painted in oil in the reign of Queen Anne; a table of benefactions, the Lord's [prayer and belief, are, with the exception of an organ, erected a few years ago, all the other principal ornaments of the interior of this holy edifice. In justice it must be observed, that notwithstanding the humble exterior and interior of the church, it is exceeded by no place of worship in the kingdom in order, cleanliness, and in the due observance of its services, as respects the present Reverend Pastors.

THE CHURCHYARD. If it be possible to be in love with death, it certainly must be while gazing on the daisy-clad graves of this lovely, green church-yard. Ah! 'tis here,

—— the dead returns to dust,
In Nature's own befitting way;
Earth o'er them throws a mantling robe,
Of flowers both sweet and gay.

The towering, leafy, linden trees, which encompass this church-yard, have often and invariably called forth the admiration of strangers. They were planted at the suggestion or wish of one of the ancestors of John Wright, Esq., Eyam,—his grandfather, I believe. They have, however, been deemed a nuisance, and one half have been felled about two years ago, to the great regret of the parishioners in general. Notwithstanding this affectionate regard, it must be admitted that the lopping down of every other has greatly improved the

church as a striking feature in the landscape, besides adding to the airiness and lightsomeness of the church-yard.

Amongst the prominent and generally interesting objects of this place of village sepulchre is, the tomb of Mrs. Mompesson,

“Where tears have rained, nor yet shall cease to flow.”

WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

Ah! what numbers have I seen bending over this hallowed tomb, chained as it were to the spot, by emotions the most intense and overwhelming. O! what a glorious and convincing evidence is this of the immortal sympathy which exists in the souls of beings created in the image of God, and destined to live eternally after death.

The inscription on the top of the tomb is in Latin—the following is a translation:—“Catherine, wife of William Mompesson, Rector of this church, daughter of Ralph Carr, Esq., late of Cocken, in the county of Durham. She was buried on the 25th day of August, 1666! Take heed for ye know not the hour.” On one end of the tomb is an hour glass, between two expanded wings, intended to represent the rapid flight of time; underneath, on an oblong tablet, *Cave* is inscribed; and nearer the base appears the words *Nescites Horam*. On the other end of the tomb is a death's head, resting on a plain projecting tablet, below which are the words *Mihi lucrum*, nearly obliterated. At the corners of the tomb are four rude stone pillars; and at the east end a yew tree has been planted by the present Rector, the Rev. E. B. Bagshaw.

Opposite the chancel door, and very near the tomb of Mrs. Mompesson, is the old stone cross,

which has found a place in the sketch books of numberless visitors and admirers. It is about eight feet high, although about a foot of the shaft is broken and lost. A variety of figures and designs are embossed thereon, with a many singular symbolical devices. What are said to be *Runic* and Scandinavian knots, liberally adorn its sides. No cross, perhaps, in England, is more richly embellished. It would be difficult, amongst so many conflicting opinions on the subject, to say anything correct respecting the origin of crosses. Some give them a Danish and some a Saxon origin: they are, most probably, no older than the time of the Crusades. Rhodes, in the Peak Scenery, states that the top part of this cross lay in the church-yard, covered with docks and thistles, when Howard, the philanthropist, was at Eyam; and that he caused it to be placed on the dilapidated shaft. This is a mistake. The top part may have been some time from its proper place, but it was before Howard's time. This venerable relic of antiquity was, a few years since, raised up and placed upon a kind of pedestal for its better preservation and appearance.

This church-yard has often and justly been styled poetic ground; "scarcely a stone but has its distich commemorative of the virtues of the deceased, and the sorrows of surviving relatives." Near the tomb of Mrs. Mompesson, and close by the chancel door, there is an humble upright stone, with the following quaint inscription:—

Here lieth the body of Ann Sellars,
Buried by this stone—who
Died on Jan. 15th day, 1731.
Likewise here lise dear Isaac
Sellars, my husband and my right,
Who was buried on that same day come

THE HISTORY OF

Seven years, 1738. In seven years
 Time there come a change—
 Observe and here you'll see,
 On that same day come
 Seven years my husband's
 Laid by me.

WRITTEN BY ISAAC SELLARS.

Numberless are the stones in this burial place that contain the offerings of the muse of the Rev. R. Cunningham, curate of Eyam church from 1772 to 1790. Close adjoining the south side of the steeple, or tower, is the burial place of the Sheldons, Eyam, the maternal ancestors of Thomas Fentem, Esq., surgeon, of Eyam Terrace. Their tombs, under which is the vault, are palied off with metal palisading—very neatly. Affixed to the tower, just over the tombs, is a stone, containing the following lines, partly from Shakspeare's Cymbeline :—

“ Elizth. Laugher, Ob. Feb. 4th, 1741, *Æt.* 24.

Fear no more the heat o' th' sun,
 Nor the furious winter's rages,
 Thou thy worldly task hast done,
 Home art gone and ta'en thy wages.
 I weep thee now, but I too must,
 Here end with thee and turn to dust ;
 In Christ may endless union prove,
 The consummation of our love.

Erected by Tho. Sheldon. (*Her Lover.*)

The following epitaph, written by him whom it commemorates, cannot but be recognized as a mutilated quotation from a fine passage in Homer's Iliad. The sense is reversed and in every respect spoiled :—

“ William Talbot, died April 16, 1817, aged 79 years.

Cold death o'ertook him in his *aged years*,
 And left *no parents* unavailing tears ;
Relations now enjoy his worldly store—
 The *race* forgotten and the name no more.”

Spencer T. Hall, in his incomparable “ Ram-

bles in the Country," thus beautifully alludes to this church-yard:—"A cemetery more indicative of local history and character than this, it would be difficult to find perhaps in the whole of England; and I never read a more interesting chapter of village biography than here."

RECTORS. The Register, in which there is nearly all that can be found respecting the names and dates of the succession of the Rectors, is astonishingly deficient in information on this head. By reference to other sources, and what the Register affords, I am still only able to give the following imperfect account, as respects the time when they succeeded each other. Nor have I been more successful in attempting to get the names of those who preceded the first on the following list:—

	Died.	Died or Resigned.	Sus- pended.	Resigned.
Rev. Robert Talbot	1630			
Rev. Sherland Adams			1644	
Rev. Thomas Stanley... ..				1662
Rev. Sherland Adams (again)	1664			
Rev. William Mompeasson				1669
Rev. Henry Adams or Oldham... ..		1675		
Rev. — Ferns		1679		
Rev. — Carver*				
Rev. Joseph Hunt	1709			
Rev. — Hawkins				1711
Rev. Alexander Hamilton... ..	1717			
Rev. Dr. Edmund Finch	1737			
Rev. — Bruce	1739			
Rev. Thomas Seward... ..	1790			
Rev. Charles Hargrave	1822			
Hon. Rev. Robert Eden				1826
Rev. Edward B. Bagshaw, Present Rector				
Rev. J. Casson, Curate				

* This Rector was of the family of Carvers, of Whiston, Yorkshire, of whom M. M. Middleton, Esq., Leam Hall, is a descendant.

Of these Rectors, only a few have been particularly distinguished. The Rev. Robert Talbot, whose name is the first in the oldest Register, was of the family of the Talbots, Earls of Shrewsbury. The Talbots of Eyam, of whom the last of the name died in 1817, were descended from this Rector, and were consequently of the same aristocratical blood.*

The Rev. Sherland Adams, was Rector of Eyam, and also of Treeton, in Yorkshire. His numerous and vexatious suits at law with the parishioners of Eyam, rendered him extremely hated; and his conduct at Treeton, where he chiefly resided, was no less disreputable. When the war broke out between King Charles and the Parliament, his intolerance and party spirit became ungovernable; and his furious loyalty assumed such an aspect, that he was regarded with disgust. The measures he took in favour of the royal cause, excited the notice of the partizans of the Parliament, and he was seized, deprived of his livings, and cast into prison. The charges preferred against him are embodied in a pamphlet, written by one Nicholas Ardron, of Treeton, the only copy of which, now known, is in the British Museum. One of the accusations is as follows:—
 “Further, it is charged against him, that he is a man much given to much trouble and suits at law, as is well known at Eyam, in Derbyshire, where he was Rector, where they tasted of this his turbulent spirit; that he gave tythe of lead ore to the King against the Parliament, delivered a man and musket against them, and sent a fat ox to the

* I have not any direct proof of what is here advanced, but it is almost certain. And I noticed in looking over the genealogy of the Earls of Shrewsbury, that the adopted names of the minor members were Richard, Robert, and William—the Talbots of Eyam were the same.

Earl of Newcastle, as a free gift to maintain the war against the Parliament." He was amongst the number of gentlemen who compounded for their estates. For a small estate at Woodlathes, near Conisbro', he paid £198, where he resided until the restoration, when he was restored to his livings again. That this Rev. Divine, was a disgrace to his order, may be satisfactorily seen, from the following extra evidence:—When the Rev. — Fowler, Sheffield, gave up his living for non-conformity, Sherland said that, "Fowler was a fool, for before he would have lost his on that account, he would have sworn a black crow was white."* How glaring and striking the contrast between this conforming hypocrite, and the virtuous, non-conformist, Stanley. Adams died April 11th, 1664, and was buried in the chancel of the Church at Treeton, where a Latin epitaph commemorates his loyalty, *virtues*, and sufferings.

The Rev. Thomas Stanley, whose memory is still cherished in Eyam and its vicinity, with a degree of adoration which rarely falls to the lot of any public man, was translated to the living of Eyam, in the year 1644, immediately after the arrest of Sherland Adams, the *bona fide* Rector. He continued in his office, beloved and respected, until Bartholomew-day, 1662. It was in the capacity of Curate, however, that he officiated from 1660 to 1662. Sherland Adams, having obtained possession of his livings at the restoration, in 1660. After enduring, for a few years, the sneers and bickering of a few bitter enemies, Stanley laid his head on the pillow of death, encircled with an halo of consolation, arising from an uncorrupted heart and an unviolated conscience.

* Vide Hunter's History of Hallamshire.

He was buried at Eyam, where he died, August, 1670. During the time of this holy man's ministry at Eyam, he performed the part of lawyer in the making of wills, and in numerous other matters. In his hand writing there are still extant numerous testamentary documents, and his signature is attached to many important deeds of conveyance, all tending to prove his high esteem—his honour and unimpeachable probity. He was supported by the voluntary contributions of two-thirds of the parishioners. Let it be understood, however, that the high character here given of Stanley, is from the consideration of his sterling virtues, and not from his non-conformity, of the nature of which, I have but a faint knowledge. Of his successor, Mompesson, enough can never be said in his praise.

The Rev. Joseph Hunt has rendered his name somewhat particular, by an ill-judged, and disgraceful act, during his ministry at Eyam. The circumstance, although but little known now, is, however, well authenticated, and is as follows:—A party of miners had assembled at the Miners' Arms Inn, Eyam, the house now occupied by Mr. John Slinn; it was kept by a Matthew Ferns, and an infant child of his being suddenly taken ill, the rector, Hunt, was sent for to baptise it immediately. Having performed the ceremony he was invited to sit and regale himself with the boozing bacchanalians—the miners. This, it appears, he did until he was inebriated. The landlord had a very handsome daughter about eighteen, and Hunt, inspired by John Barleycorn, began to speak out in luscious commendation of her charms. From one thing to another, it was at last agreed that Hunt should marry her; and the miners, not

willing to trust him to fulfil his engagement another time, insisted that the ceremony should take place there and then. To this, after taking another glass, he unfortunately consented. The common prayer book was brought out, and one of the miners put on a solemn aspect, and read the whole ceremony: Hunt and the happy damsel performing their respective parts. After the affair had spread round the neighbourhood, it at last reached the ears of the Bishop of the Diocese, who threatened to suspend him if he did not fulfil in earnest what he had done in jest. He was therefore obliged to marry Miss Ferns, legally. This, however, was not the last of his misfortunes, arising from the affair: he was under promise of marriage to a young lady, near Derby, who immediately commenced an action against him for breach of promise. Some years were passed in litigation, which drained his purse and estranged his friends; and eventually, he had to take shelter in the vestry (which, I think, was built for that purpose), where he resided the remainder of his life, to keep the law-hounds at bay. He died in this humble appendage to the church, where his bones and those of his wife lie buried. He is represented to have been very social—the young men of the village visited him in his solitary abode, where they sat round the fire, telling alternate tales to *while* away the dreary winter nights. This improvident marriage was attended with its natural consequence—poverty: he had a large family; and one of his descendants is now one of the most celebrated cricket-players in England; and another, a female belonging to Eyam, is now an inmate of the Bakewell Union Workhouse.

The Rev. — Hawkins succeeded Hunt; but

he only tarried in Eyam two years. He exchanged his living with the Rev. Alexander Hamilton, just before the rich vein of lead ore, commonly called the edge-side vein, came into Eyam liberty. The great profit accruing to the Rector from this circumstance, induced Hawkins to regret his exchange; and he, eventually, but unsuccessfully, used every possible means to annul his contract.

Dr. Edmund Finch, brother of Finch, the Earl of Nottingham, uncle and guardian to the daughters and coheiresses of William Saville, Marquis of Halifax, succeeded Hamilton, as Rector of Eyam. He left the great living of Wigan for the then very rich living of Eyam. During the twenty years he was Rector, he resided but little at Eyam. He gave the very handsome service of communion plate; and was otherwise a benefactor.*

The Rev. — Bruce succeeded Finch. The living was presented to him while he was abroad. He died of brain fever, while returning in haste to take possession of his living.

The Rev. Thomas Seward was Rector from the death of Bruce in 1739 to 1790. He became, in 1772, Canon of Lichfield; but still held the living of Eyam. The Rev. Peter Cunningham, poet, was his curate. During his residence in Lichfield, he made an annual visit to Eyam; and was frequently drawn in his carriage into Eyam by the rejoicing villagers, whom he invariably recompensed by the distribution of a well fed carcase of beef.

The Rev. Charles Hargrave succeeded Seward. Troubles connected with his mode of obtaining the

* The great-great-grandfather of the author of this work, came with Finch, from Wigan, as a servant:—he was a young man; he married, had a family, and died in Eyam. Hence the origin of the author's family in Eyam; and hence their attachment to the Established Church.

living harrassed him for some years. The matter was at length settled; and he lived thirty-two years as pastor, respected, loved, and deservedly esteemed.

The Hon. and Rev. Robert Eden, his successor, has left an indelible trace of sincere respect on the heart of every inhabitant of Eyam. He resigned the living in 1826; and his farewell sermon on the occasion drew from his sobbing audience a shower of tears. Since his departure he has, however, visited at intervals his former and affectionate flock; when he has had the satisfaction to see how highly he is still esteemed by the villagers of Eyam. The Rev. E. B. Bagshaw succeeded him, and is now the present Rector of Eyam.

THE LIVING, on account of the mines, varies in its annual amount. One penny for every dish of ore is due to the Rector; and twopence farthing for every load of hillock-stuff. During the greater part of the last century the living was worth from a £1000 to £2000 a year. Little, however, is now derived from the mines; but it is likely, should the speculations now in progress to liberate the mines from water, be carried into effect, that this benefice may become as valuable again, or even more so. It is now worth about £300 a year: near two-thirds of which is derived from glebe lands, and the remainder from tythes and surplice fees.

THE REGISTER contains but few matters worth transcribing. The following are the most particular:—"December 30th, 1663, buried Anna the traveller, who according to her own account, was 136 years of age. Edward Torre, June 30th, 1699, killed with a plugg over against the parson's fold. Elizabeth, the wife of John Trout, died in a

snow near Sir William, as she was returning from Tideswell market, Feb. 4th, 1692. John White, found dead in the Dale, Feb. 18th, 1695." These are the few most prominent events recorded in the Register. I will, however, give one more extract strikingly indicative of the simplicity of the mode in which our village forefathers characterized each other :—"Old Robert Slinn, died 26th of November, 1692." How patriarchal! How much in keeping "with the spirit and manners of the locality," is this old man's distinction from others.

THE MINES. There is, particularly on the south side of Eyam, strong evidence of much mining in past ages. Indeed, the Eyam Mineral Charter proves the antiquity of the lead mines at Eyam. This village and parish is included under the general denomination of the KING'S FIELD, which is subject to the operation of a peculiar system of mineral law. One clause of the law declares, "that by the custom of the mine it is lawful for *all* the King's liege subjects to dig, delve, search, subvert, and overturn, all manner of grounds, lands, meadows, closes, pastures, mears, and marshes, for ore mines, of *whose inheritance soever they be*; dwelling houses, orchards, and gardens, excepted." From the inconvenient effects of this sweeping clause many of the old freehold tenures of the parish of Eyam, are exempt, through the virtue of a charter granted by King John, previously to his being created Duke of Lancaster. Who holds this charter now, I am not aware, neither can any person name the particular tenures alluded to. They are, however, supposed to be those contiguous to the village: or what is denominated the old land. With the exception of a little land at Hucklow, and at Grippe,

these decreed tenures at Eyam, are the only lands exempted from the arbitrary mineral laws, observed throughout the comprehensive district of a great part of the Peak of Derbyshire.

Of the ore obtained from the mines in the whole parish of Eyam, the *lot*, which is every thirteenth dish, is claimed and taken by the Lords of the Manor. One penny a dish belongs to the Rector; and a small exaction called *cope*, is paid by the purchaser of the ore to the Barmaster: these, with a trifle paid to the Rector, and the Lords of the Manor, for what is provincially called hillock-stuff, are the lots and tythes paid by the mines of Eyam.

The Lords of the Manors of Eyam and Stoney Middleton, held an half-yearly court, alternately at Eyam and Stoney Middleton. This court is denominated the Great Court Barmoot, at which the steward, — Charge, Esq., Chesterfield, presides, who with twenty-four jurymen, chosen every half-year, determine all cases of disputes that occur, respecting the working of the mines in the above Manors. Other matters, independent of mines, are also adjusted at these periodical courts, of which, the whole expences, are paid by the Lords of the Manors. The Barmaster, M. Frost, Esq., Baslow, has also important offices connected with the mines: putting miners into the possession of new discovered mines, collecting the lots due to the Lords of the Manors, and measuring all the ore, are only a few of the Barmaster's duties.

The great vein of ore, known as the Edge-side vein, was discovered about a century and a half ago; but it was not worked in the parish of Eyam, until some time after its discovery. In the space of fifty or sixty years, it was cut for more than

two miles in length; but dipping very fast eastward, it at last reached the water, and could no longer be successfully worked. A sough or level was brought up to it from the river Derwent, about eighty years since, but did not answer general expectation. The quantity of metal obtained from this vein, may be judged of, from the fact, that it enhanced the annual income of the Rector, from £1200 to £1800 a year, and this for a long time. Other veins in the vicinity have been very productive; but nearly all have been long shut up by the same, almost irresistible element—water. The water-groove mine, just within the parish of Eyam, is by far the richest in the neighbourhood. A steam engine of three hundred horse power has been just erected on this mine, and it is anxiously hoped that it will be able to compete with the water. Lumps of metal, from three to five hundred weight are often obtained from this very rich lead mine. By far the oldest lead works are of the *rake* kind, extending over a large tract of land south of the village. And, as I have before observed, the village, in a great measure, stands on the ruins of old mines; all tending to prove the great antiquity of the lead works at Eyam. Camden thinks that Derbyshire was alluded to by Pliny, when he says, “In Britain, lead is found near the surface of the earth in such abundance, that a law is made to limit the quantity which shall be gotten.”

Of the origin of the laws and customs connected with the working of the lead mines in Eyam and its vicinity there is much room for speculation. Some think that they originated with the original inhabitants of Derbyshire; but from a passage in Suetonius, it is inferred that the mineral customs

and laws of the aborigines were superseded by others introduced by the Romans. Heineccius countenances the supposition, that private adventurers were afterwards permitted to work the mines, which would be productive of multifarious laws and regulations, and hence their anomalous character.

Bole-hills are innumerable in the vicinage of Eyam—they were the places where the ore was smelted, before the introduction of the Cupulo.

The mines in Eyam-edge are very deep, and the New-engine mine I have heard stated as being the deepest in Derbyshire. Among the number in the edge is the Hay-cliff; a mine distinguished for having contained in great abundance of that extraordinary phenomenon in the mineral world, provincially called SLICKENSIDES. It is a species of *Gelena*; and is well-known amongst mineralogists. This mine once had it in singular quantity and quality. The effects of this mineral are terrific: a blow with a hammer, a stroke or scratch with the miner's pick, are sufficient to blast asunder the massive rocks to which it is found attached. One writer says, "The stroke is immediately succeeded by a crackling noise, accompanied with a noise not unlike the mingled hum of a swarm of bees: shortly afterwards an explosion follows, so loud and appalling, that even the miners, though a hardy race of men, and little accustomed to fear, turn pale and tremble at the shock." Of the nature of this mineral, and its terrible power, there have been a many, but quite unsatisfactory solutions. Whitehurst, in his work on the formation of the Earth, thus mentions its wonderful power:—"In the year 1738, an explosion took place at the Hay-cliff mine, Eyam, by the power of Slickensides.

Two hundred barrels of materials were blown out at one blast—each barrel containing 350 lbs. weight. During the explosion the earth shook as by an earthquake.” A person of the name of Higginbotham once but narrowly escaped with life, by striking incautiously this substance in the above mine. Experienced miners can, however, work where it greatly abounds, without much danger. It is also known by the name of CRACKING-WHOLE.

In this mine and many others in Eyam-edge, was sensibly felt the earthquake which destroyed Lisbon, on Saturday, November 1st, 1755. The following is a narrative of the occurrence, compressed from an account written by Mr. Francis Mason, an intelligent overseer of the mines in Eyam-edge at the time mentioned:—“About eleven o’clock in the forenoon of the first of November, 1755, as Francis Mason was sitting in a small room at the distance of from forty to fifty yards from the mouth of one of the engine shafts, he felt the shock of an earthquake, so violent that it raised him up in his chair, and shook some pieces of lime and plaster from the sides and roof of his little hovel. In a field about three hundred yards from the mine he afterwards observed a chasin, or cleft, in the earth, which he supposed was made at the same time: its direction was parallel to the vein of ore the miners were then pursuing, and its continuation from one extremity to the other was nearly one hundred and fifty yards. Two miners, who were employed in the drifts about sixty fathoms deep when the earthquake took place, were so terrified at the shock, that they dared not attempt to climb the shaft, which they dreaded might run in upon them, and entomb them alive. They felt themselves surrounded with danger, and as

they were conversing with each other on the means of safety, and looking for a place of refuge, they were alarmed by a second shock, much more violent than the one preceding. They now ran precipitately to the interior of the mine: it was an instinctive movement that no way bettered their condition; it only changed the spot of earth where they had previously stood; but their danger and their fears were still the same. Another shock ensued, and after an awful and almost breathless interval of four or five minutes, a fourth and afterwards a fifth succeeded. Every repercussion was followed by a loud rumbling noise, which continued for about a minute; then gradually decreasing in force, like the thunder retiring into distance, it subsided into an appalling stillness more full of terror than the sounds which had passed away, leaving the mind unoccupied by other impressions, to contemplate the mysterious nature of its danger. The whole space of time included between the first and the last shock was nearly twenty minutes. When the men had recovered a little from their trepidation, they began to examine the passages, and to endeavour to extricate themselves from their confinement. As they passed along the drifts, they observed that pieces of minerals were scattered along the floor, which had been shaken from the sides and the roof, but all the shafts remained entire and uninjured." A few years before this earthquake, another was very sensibly felt at Eyam. It happened on the wakes Sunday, and the inhabitants were in the church, when the shock came on. Several had their prayer-books knocked from their hands by the shock; and the pewter plates tingled on the shelves of the houses in and around Eyam.

In bringing this brief account of the mines to a conclusion, it may not be improper to notice, that a many miners have fallen a sacrifice in pursuing their perilous and hazardous occupation. The following are those, now remembered, with the names of the mines where they were killed :—

Edward Torre, killed near the Parson's Fold, A.D. 1669.

Three men, Stoke Sough, 80 years since,

William Fox, Shaw Engine, 90 do.

Edward, Dooley, Twelve Meers.

Robert Unwin, do.

Michael Walker, do.

Nineteen men, Middleton Engine, (different times.)

— Bramwell, Twelve Meers.

— Simson, do.

— Bennet, New Engine.

— Fearest, Stoke Sough.

Samuel Howard, Water Grove.

William Hancock, do.

A man, Broadlow.

A lad, do.

George Benson, Pasture Grove.

— Stailey, Twelve Meers.

— Middleton, Mowerwood Engine.

Robert Middleton, Slater's Engine.

Francis Mower, Haycliff.

MINSTRELS. — **JOHN NIGHTBRODER**, although not known as a minstrel, was, however, a highly celebrated literary character, and a liberal benefactor. He was born at Eyam, and founded the house of Carmellites, or White Friars, at Doncaster, in the year, A.D. 1350.*

MISS ANNA SEWARD, the well known poetess, was born at Eyam, in the year A.D. 1747. In the literary world she is still distinguished, not only for her poetical powers; but for her biographical and epistolary talents. Her father, the Rev. Thomas Seward, Rector of Eyam, prebendary of Salisbury, and canon residentiary of Lichfield, was a man of

* Vide Hunter's Deanery of Doncaster.

considerable learning and taste. In 1750, he published an edition of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher; he was also the author of an ingenious tract on the conformity of Paganism and Popery; and in the second volume of Dodsley's Collection he published a few little, elegant poems. Is it not natural to suppose, then, that his far famed daughter first tasted of the divine fountain of poesy from the cup of his own presenting? At the age of three, before she could read, he had taught her to lisp the *Allegro* and *Penseroso* of Milton; and in her ninth year she could repeat from memory, with varied and correct accent, the three first books of *Paradise Lost*. In her seventh year, she left Eyam; and a few years after she removed with her father from Lichfield to Bishop's-place, where she resided until her death. She had several sisters and one brother, but all died in their infancy, excepting the second daughter, who lived till the age of nineteen. Miss Seward's intellectual precocity was zealously cherished by her admiring father; but as she advanced into womanhood, he withdrew that animating welcome which he had given to the first efforts of her muse. For awhile her productions were confined to the perusal of her intimate friends; but on her becoming acquainted with Lady Miller, of Bath Easton, she was induced to write for the poetic institution of that villa, and to become a candidate for its myrtle wreath: this she repeatedly obtained: and thus, Miss Seward, first entered into the temple of undying fame.

It is unnecessary to enumerate her works—they are well and deservedly known. The "Elegy to Major Andre," the "Death of Captain Cook," the poetical novel "Louisa," the "Epic Ode on the return of General Elliott from Gibraltar," are

amongst the best of her productions. In private life she was much esteemed; and as an author, totally free from that contemptible envy which too frequently detracts from contemporary merit. Of her enduring attachment to Eyam, the place of her birth, she often and warmly dilated; and an annual visit to her birth-place, was the invariable testimony of her enthusiastic affection. On her journey through Derbyshire, to a musical festival at Sheffield, in the summer of 1788, she visited Eyam, and wrote the following ode, which has never before appeared in print. The original manuscript was in the hands of T. Birds, Esq., Eyam, who, before his death, kindly permitted a friend to make a transcript from which this copy has been taken:—

ELGIAC ODE.

“ A little while I leave with anxious heart,
Source of my filial cares, thee **FULL OF DAYS**;
Lur'd by a promise from harmonic art
To breathe her Handel's rich, immortal lays.
Pensive I trace the Derwent's amber wave,
Winding through sylvan banks; and view it lave
The soft luxuriant valleys, high o'er-peer'd
By hills and rocks in solemn grandeur reer'd.

“ Not two short miles from thou, can I refrain
Thy haunts my native **EYAM**, long unseen.
Thou and thy loved inhabitants again
Shall meet my transient gaze. Thy rocky screen—
Thy airy cliffs I mount and seek thy shade—
Thy roofs that brow the steep romantic glade—
But while on me the eye of Friendship glow,
Swell my pain'd sighs, my tears spontaneous flow.

“ In scenes paternal not beheld through years,
Nor seen till now but by my Father's side;
Well might the tender tributary tears,
From the keen pang of duteous fondness glide;
Its Pastor to this human flock no more,
Shall the long flight of future days restore;
Distant he droops—and that once gladdening eye,
Now languid gleams e'en when his friends are nigh.

"Through this known* walk where weedy gravel lies,
 Rough and unsightly ;—by the long course grass
 Of the once smooth and verdant green with sighs
 To the deserted rectory I pass.
 The naked gloomy chambers where I found
 Childhood's first bliss, my slow steps wander round ;
 How chang'd since once the lightsome walls beneath,
 The social joys did their warm comforts breathe.

"Yet ere I go—who may return no more,
 That sacred dome mid yonder shadowy trees,
 Let me revisit :—ancient, massy door ;
 Thou greatest hoarse :—my vital spirits freeze
 Passing the vacant pulpit, to the space
 Where humble rails the decent altar grace,
 And where my infant sisters' ashes sleep,†
 Whose loss I left the childish sports to weep.

"Now the low beams ; with paper garlands hung
 In memory of some village youth or maid ;
 Draw the soft tear from thrill'd remembrance sprung
 How oft my childhood marked that tribute paid :
 The gloves suspended by the garlands side,
 White as its snowy flowers, with ribbons tied ;
 Dear village ! long these wreaths funereal spread,
 Simple memorials of the early dead.

"But O ! thou blank and silent pulpit, thou
 That with a father's precept just and bland,
 Didst win my ear as Reason's strengthening glow,
 Shewed their full value now thou seem'st to stand
 Before these eyes, suffus'd with gushing tears,
 Thou dearest relic of departed years ;
 Of eloquence paternal, nervous, clear,
 Dim remonition thou, and bitter is my tear.""

This highly celebrated lady died at Bishop's Place, in A.D. 1809, and in the sixty-second year of her age. Her remains repose at Lichfield.

* The Parsonage garden.

† Two of the author's little sisters lie buried in the Chancel of Eyam Church ; but no stone or inscription marks the place where they sleep.

* The sense in a many of the lines is exceedingly obscure. The ode most probably was written in haste, and never amended.

The Rev. P. CUNNINGHAM, who was officiating curate at Eyam Church a many years during the latter part of the Rectorship of the Rev. T. Seward, was once greatly celebrated as a poet : and deservedly so, although his productions were far from voluminous. It was chiefly, if not wholly while he resided at Eyam, that his muse, inspired by the romantic grandeur of the surrounding "dells and woodlands wild," wandered forth by Derwent's stream, and there enraptured heard,

"The red-breast, hid in golden foliage, pour
Slow warbled requiems o'er the dying year."

CHATSWORTH.

Of the parentage of Cunningham but very little is now known in Eyam. That he had received a highly classical education his poetical works very plainly indicate : and his frequent allusions to the classics are, in general, heightened by original comparisons. To his favourite river, Derwent, he thus pays "an elegant tribute" :—

"The muse,
She wanders, Derwent ! where, with lingering pride,
The amber-tressed Naiads of thy stream
Through bending woods and vales luxuriant glide.
Fair, when the parting sun's mild golden light
A mellower radiance on thy bosom throws,
But fairer when the silver beams of night,
With trembling lustre, on thy stream repose.
"On Latmos thus, as Grecian bards have sung,
When Night's fair Queen forsook her starry road,
And o'er Endymion's face enamoured hung,
His sleeping form with silver radiance glow'd."

CHATSWORTH.

This is a very beautiful comparison, and original. The whole poem is in a great measure equally good : strongly filled with "music, image, sentiment, and thought." There are, however, some slight blemishes : as in one of the stanzas here

quoted, where the "*Naiads*" are made to "*glide*" instead of the "*river*." This production was, I believe, the first he published.

Cunningham's next poem, "THE RUSSIAN PROPHECY," was written in A.D. 1785 ; and was occasioned by a phenomenon which appeared in the heavens, but was only observed in Russia.*

THE NAVAL TRIUMPH is one of his happiest efforts, which, with the former two, constitute nearly the whole of his poetical effusions, composed at Eyam.

Perhaps no village pastor was ever so beloved, by the flock committed to his charge, as Cunningham was by the inhabitants of Eyam : his memory is still cherished, with endearing affection, notwithstanding more than half a century has elapsed since he so reluctantly left the place. His farewell sermon, and the effect it produced on the sobbing audience, is still remembered, and frequently mentioned. It was a composition full of eloquence, powerful pathos, recollected kindness, and delivered in the tenderest tones of affection. Some few copies in manuscript are still extant ; and "*are preserved with a sort of religious veneration.*" After having preached farewell sermons in some of the churches of the approximate villages, where he was equally beloved, he departed from Eyam, in the year 1790.

On leaving this village where he had spent the flower of his days, "through evil and good report," he was appointed chaplain to the English Factory, at Smyrna, where he dwelled several years. From the time of his leaving Eyam he was faithfully and almost unremittingly attended by Misfortune : in the Archipelago he narrowly

* Vide Gentleman's Magazine, July, 1785, page 531.

escaped shipwreck; and at Smyrna he was involved in equal peril by fire, in which his papers and manuscripts were wholly consumed.

To Cunningham, a residence at Smyrna was banishment, and he resolved to revisit his native land. Without friends, money, desolate, unknown, and far from home, he returned on foot through Germany on his way to Paris; suffering from fatigue and endless privations. During this long journey, he approached one night, after a day's hard travelling, a large town on the borders of Hungary, when he sat down by the way-side to reflect on his forlorn condition. After having pondered awhile over his misfortunes, he took from his pocket, for the first time, a volume of poetry, which had been presented to him by an English lady, on his departure from Smyrna. A particular poem had been recommended for his perusal by his female friend, and he turned to the page, where he found, "close nestled within the leaves," a note, or order, for fifty pounds: "thus delicately," says Rhodes, "did an amiable woman contrive to administer to the necessities of a stranger in a foreign land."

To his own country he soon arrived, and undertook the duties of an humble curacy in the vicinity of London, but soon after obtained a small living through the influence of the Devonshire family. This he did not long enjoy. "Invited to preach to a society to whom he had become endeared, at Islington, he attended, and after delivering his last, and one of his best discourses, he dined with the delighted members. He appeared in high spirits, but as soon as the cloth was drawn, while conversing with a gentleman near him, he fell back in his chair, and expired without a sigh or groan:

such was the end of Cunningham." Of his moral character, during the latter part of his ministry at Eyam, much has been said : whether justly or not, I am not able to say. One thing is certain, that for a great number of years, he was unparralleled in the fulfilment of his duties ; and that he laboured assiduously to improve the condition of his parishioners, by bettering their manners, and giving instruction to youth, wholly regardless of pecuniary compensation. And did he then fall off from so noble a duty ? If so, how lamentable ! Perhaps he was, to some degree, deteriorated in character by that vile fiend—foul *slander*,

" Whose head is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Out-venoms all the worms of *Nile*, whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world. Kings, Queens, and states,
Maids, matrons, nay the secrets of the grave,
This viperous *slander* enters."—CYMBELINE.

In the person of RICHARD FURNESS, Eyam, his birth-place, furnishes another candidate for literary honours. In a history of his native village, he must have a first place as regards literary distinction ; and also as respects his having contributed so very largely towards raising the humble place of his birth to a classical ascendancy—great among the villages of the Peak. He is now living in the vicinity of Sheffield ; highly honoured by the literati of the surrounding country : and, although declining in years, it is ardently hoped that his hours are, to some degree, still spent with the Muses.

Of his poetical works, little need to be said : they are pretty generally known and commended. " The Rag-Bag," with the exception of a few fugitive pieces, was his first published work ; and by a

many much admired. "Medicus Magus," his next work is, although not so popular, a far better written poem. In the latter there are a many beautiful passages: some novel ideas, highly characteristic of a fine genius. As this work, consisting of three cantos, is on a purely local subject, it is not, therefore, so generally read, as the former work; yet there are beauties scattered over the pages of the latter, highly and intellectually pleasing. Those who have not read "Medicus Magus" may see a fine passage or two from its pages, quoted in the foregoing account of the plague; and the subjoined extract from the same production, if not of equal merit, is very good:

"With pleasure man's not uniformly blest,
Such long satiety would spoil the zest;
Nor are the sufferings of his nature vain,
His sweetest moments are the fruits of pain;
And as the knife a sounder healing brings,
So virtue's fountain in affliction springs.
The storms of life all human peace assail,
Or in the capitol or sheltering dale;
Alike they drive on infancy and years,
Each eye must weep the appointed cup of tears;
Or if, or not, God's blessings are abused,
From pain no mortal, heaven has yet excused;
It tends alike, the couch of straw and down,
The' arthritic monarch and rheumatic clown:
Smites Æsculapius 'midst his stores of health,
And batters Croesus through his walls of wealth."

This ardent votary of the Muses is now fast advancing on his way through "this vale of tears;" yet it is fervently hoped that, ere "his sands of life are run," he will add full many a jewel to his well-won crown of fame: thus embalming his memory in the admiration of future times, and emblazoning with honour and glory, his loved and native village—Eyam.

This romantic village has other, if less success-

ful, candidates for poetic honours: and of this class there are a few whose effusions have only been perused by friends.

FAMILIES OF DISTINCTION. There appears to have been but very few families of wealth at Eyam in times of yore. The Staffords were by far the most conspicuous and wealthy. Nothing, however, is known of their lineage; they were exceeding rich, and of great import in the village and neighbourhood. Humphrey, the last male heir of this family, died at Eyam, where they had invariably resided, somewhere about the year A.D. 1580. His immense property was valued at the time of his death, at £400,000, which was equally divided amongst his four daughters. Catherine, the eldest, married Rowland Morewood, of the Oaks, near Bradfield, Yorkshire: she was buried at Bradfield, July 16th, 1595. Gertrude married Rowland Eyre, Esq., Hassop, an ancestor of the present Earl Newburgh: her burial, at Longstone, in A.D. 1624, is recorded on a brass plate in the Church. Ann married Francis Bradshaw, of Bradshaw, near Chapel-en-le-Frith; and the other remaining daughter was, I imagine, never married, but was known as Madame Stafford. Francis Bradshaw had the family mansion of the Staffords included in his wife's share of her father's property, where he and his descendants resided until the plague broke out in Eyam. The house was very capacious and antique; it stood at the west end of Eyam, and a large field, now called the Orchard, and another, the Hall-yard, were its appendages. The fish-pan belonging to this very old mansion was destroyed not many years ago. The last Bradshaw who resided at Eyam, was erecting on the site of the old dwelling, what is now known

as the Old Hall, at the very time the plague commenced, when he and his family fled to Brampton, in Yorkshire, and never returned. The new mansion, which was rather elegant, was never finished; three or four families have, however, resided in it some time back, but it is now converted into a barn. On the south front, there is a circular stone containing the crest of the arms of the Bradshaw: *a Hart on a wreath standing under a vine*. The other part of the arms of this family is, *two bendlets between two martlets*.* That portion of the Eyam estate belonging to the Bradshaws remained in their family until the death of George Bradshaw, of Bradshaw, the last male heir of the elder branch of the Bradshaws; he left no issue, and his whole property was inherited by his sister Elizabeth, who married Joshua Galliard, Esq., of Edmonton, in Middlesex, by whom she had two sons, Peirce and John; the latter of whom died young. Peirce had a son, Bradshaw Galliard, a poet, and two daughters, Anne and Mary. Anne married Eaglesfield Smith, of Longshaw, Dumfries, Scotland; Mary married Charles Bowles, of Ratcliff, Middlesex, between whom, at the death of Bradshaw Galliard, the whole property of the Bradshaws, was divided. Eaglesfield Smith inherited the Eyam estate. The Morewood property at Eyam was sold in small lots about forty years since.

The Colyns were a family of distinction at Eyam in the reign of Henry the Sixth; but of their descendants and property nothing is now known.

* The notorious Judge Bradshaw was of this family; his grandfather went from Bradshaw Hall, Chapel-en-le-Frith, to Wyberslegh, near Marples, Cheshire, where the regicide was born.

French was the name of another rather important family in the village. A notice of this family is in the Register as follows: "Stephen, the son of Stephen French, baptized Dec. 4th, 1643." The name occurs also amongst those who died of the plague. The Brays were a family of some note at Eyam; the Register has the following record:—"Mr. Bray buried 1640." The Wilsons of Eyam were once a family of substance; in Glover's History of Derbyshire there is this notice: "Richard Milnes, Chesterfield, married Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of the Rev. R. Wilson, of Burton, Norfolk, and of Eyam, Derbyshire; she died Jan. 17, 1691." The Gibels of Eyam were a family of distinction—the only remains of whom, in Eyam, is their name as distinguishing a barn and a tor: "*Gibel barn*," and "*Gibel Torr*."*

Eyam has been the birth place of a few very eccentric characters; amongst whom is one MICHAEL BARBER, who was Parish Clerk 59 years. He was a very learned man in his time—a profound astrologer; and the following anecdote is still related of him:—A villager and Michael were walking one day down Hunger-hill lane, Eyam, when they observed two teams ploughing in an adjoining field. The villager said, "Now, Michael, if you can stop yon two teams I shall have faith in your knowledge and power." Michael immediately went to work in the lane, and succeeded, after having performed certain incantations, in stopping one of the teams, but the other kept on. "There," said Michael, "I have stopped one, but the other I cannot stop." "How is that?"

* I have a notion that the Gibels were Colyns—Gibel I cannot find written, and therefore think it is not rightly written here, but it is pronounced now nearly as I have given it.

the villager replied. "Because," said Michael, "the ploughman has said his prayers this morning, and I have no power over those who live in the fear of God." Michael lived to a good old age: he died soon after the plague. Thomas Barber, his son, was also an adept in astrology.

CORNELIUS BRUSHFIELD, of the Hanging-flat, Eyam, was perhaps the greatest anchorite that ever lived. He dwelled in a house built on the ledge of a rock in the Dale, a full quarter of a mile from any other dwelling; and, it is said, that only on one solitary occasion did he leave his abode during his whole life; and this occasion was the great contested election in North Derbyshire, by Harper and Clarke, when Cornelius visited Eyam. He died in 1780, aged 66 years. His family were Presbyterians, and remarkable for their hospitality—never suffering a visitor to leave their house without having first partaken of a basin of milk and some bread.

JOHN GREGORY, of Riley, Eyam, was in his lifetime a very singular character. His contempt of modern habits, patriarchal appearance, and profound knowledge of the most abstruse sciences, rendered him deeply interesting. In his diet, and, in fact, in his whole demeanour, he approached to what may be supposed to have characterized the primitive inhabitants of the world. His apothegms are still current in Eyam. He died greatly venerated June 9th, 1820, aged 70 years.

JOHN DOOLEY, although not eccentric in habits, was still a singular man. His love of music, and astonishing powers of memory, claimed for him general respect and esteem. Perhaps but few individuals ever possessed a greater turn for keen and caustic satire; some of his witty and pithy

remarks will ever be remembered. He died a few years since at a good old age.

PHILIP SHELDON, in his day, was considered to be a very singular and disaffected character : time has, however, proved to every inhabitant of the village that his singularity consisted in clearly seeing, and in boldly and openly declaring the disastrous consequences which would ensue from the blind policy of our rulers during the last great war with France. He died in May, 1820.

THOMAS BIRDS, Esq., the well known antiquary of Eyam, had perhaps the greatest and best collection of fossils and other curiosities in the kingdom ; and their dispersion at his death has been the source of regret to the whole village. He was greatly distinguished for urbanity ; and his benefactions to the poor have rendered his memory deservedly cherished.

Eyam is singularly distinguished for having few dissenters. With the exception of a very few Wesleyan Methodists, the whole population are of the Established Church. Methodism was, however, very early introduced in Eyam ; though I believe the first promulgators were in no place more abused. The first sermon preached in Eyam by the Methodists was in 1765, by Mr. Matthew Mayer, of Portwood-hall, near Stockport. The preacher stationed himself by Furness's barn side ; but so much hostility was exhibited on this and a subsequent occasion, that he each time narrowly escaped with life. The few friends of the preacher were pelted with brick-bats, mud, stones, and other missiles, and to such a degree did the infatuated multitude carry on their opposition, that the preacher had the ringleaders brought before a magistrate, who bound them in recognizances for their

good behaviour in future. Recourse to the law had not, however, the effect anticipated: the mass of the villagers would not suffer the preachers to come into the village, and for a many years no effort was again made. The few converts to the new doctrine repaired to Grindleford Bridge, where the preachers were not molested; in time the number increased, and preaching was again resumed in Eyam, and a chapel was erected at the east end of the village somewhere about 1780. Everett, in his History of Methodism, says, that the then inhabitants of Eyam "were employed in the lead mines, and were a most savage race."

BENEFACTORS OF EYAM. Some centuries ago, a person now unknown, left for the poor of Eyam, £15, the interest of which to be annually paid on St. Thomas's day. Dr. Edmund Finch, left £15 for the same purpose, the interest to be paid at the same time. Mr. James Furness left £5 5s. 0d. to be equally divided amongst ten old widows annually. Eyam is also included in the many villages receiving the well known Gisbourne charity. Dr. Finch, for the teaching of ten poor children of the parish of Eyam, bequeathed to the school £100, which with £15 left by another person, was laid out in freehold land, called the Long Meadow, near Bradwell, now let for £7 a year. Thomas Middleton, Leam, left £5 a year to the school for the teaching of ten children to read and write; this benefaction is charged on two pieces of land, called the Upper and Under Lowe. His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, makes an annual donation of £2 2s. 0d. to the school; and £1 10s. 0d. is produced by rental of a small piece of common land allotted to the school. Mr. James Furness left £2 a year to the Sunday School, which sum

is now equally divided between the school of the Methodists and that of the Established Church. Of the latter school, my father was principal master from its establishment in 1814, to his death in 1832.

The Endowed School is a modern building—only remarkable for its “cotton-mill-like appearance.” Mr. Samuel Bromley is the present schoolmaster, who is highly and justly respected for his abilities and morality.

At the present day, Eyam is the residence of a many respectable families, whose respective dwellings are distinguished by elegance and respectability. The RECTORY, for its commodiousness, situation, gardens, and scenery, is not surpassed by any parsonage house in England. It was rebuilt, in an improved style of architecture, about seventy-five years ago, at the expence of the Rev. T. Seward, Rector of Eyam. Since then its exterior has been greatly improved, and very much so by its present occupant, the Rev. E. B. Bagshaw, Rector. EYAM HALL, the residence of P. Wright, Esq., is a large, handsome, and rather antique looking building. The architecture is of the reign of Elizabeth, but it is a comparatively modern erection—not above a century and a half old, if so much. I have heard this mansion stated as being the same in architecture as Hayes’ Farm House, in Devonshire, the house in which Sir Walter Raleigh was born; it is, however, only in one or two particulars that there is any similarity. Eyam Hall is certainly a capacious and massive building, with exterior appendages quite in keeping with the design of the structure; and I have heard the present occupant highly commended by one skilled in architecture, for preserving, as respects the appendages, the uniformity of the whole.

The Wrights are a very ancient and wealthy family, highly distinguished for equability, consideration, and punctuality. A female of this family married, nearly a century ago, one of the Traffords, of Trafford Hall, Lancashire, who were related through marriage to the Booths, Earls of Warrington.

EYAM FIRS, is a secluded and beautiful villa, a little north of the village. It is the residence of John Wright, Esq., the elder brother of P. Wright, Esq., Eyam Hall.

EYAM TERRACE, in the east of the village, has been often admired for its picturesque situation. Its contiguity to the Dale, so beautifully romantic, adds infinitely to its delightfulness. It is owned and occupied by Thomas Fentem, Esq., Surgeon, who has inherited much of the property of his maternal grandfather, the late Philip Sheldon, Eyam.

A little south-west of the Church, a substantial and highly finished house, has been of late erected by M. M. Middleton, Esq., Leam Hall. It is occupied by William Wyatt, Esq., late of Foolow.

EYAM VIEW, is a very elegant dwelling at the west-end of the village, belonging to Thomas Burgoine, Esq., Edenzor; and late in the occupation of George Platt, Esq.

The residence of Thomas Gregory, Solicitor, is a very substantial house in the west end of the village. And a very excellent and handsome villa is now being erected in the Edge, by Mr. Francis Cocker, Eyam. There are also five good Inns in the village: the Bull's Head, the principal Inn, by Mr. John Booth; the Miners' Arms, by Mr. William Gregory; the Bold Rodney, by Mr. Samuel Furness; the Rose and Crown, by Mr. Verdan Siddall; and the King's Arms, by Mr. John Slinn.

A Society of Miners, or Sick Society, was established in Eyam, A.D. 1767; a Female Sick Society A.D. 1807; a Cow Club A.D. 1838; and a Funeral Club A.D. 1839; nearly all of which are in an improving state. But Eyam has another equally commendable institution—a Subscription Library, containing above 500 volumes, well selected. It was established A.D. 1821, under the auspices of the Hon. and Rev. Robert Eden, Charles Fentem, Esq., Mr. F. Cocker, Mr. J. Froggatt, and Mr. P. Furness. A Mechanics' Institution has also been judiciously thought of—or rather exists in an embryo state.

During the last great struggle with France, Eyam furnished a company of volunteers, about 100 in number, who went together with the Bakewell and Upper Haddon companies, on permanent duty to Ashbourn. The Eyam company were commanded by P. Wright, Esq., Captain; — Carliel, Esq., Major; and John Cooper, Lieutenant. Robert Brushfield was Drill Sergeant; Jonathan Hallam, Corporal; Thomas Hancock, Drummer; and James Fox, Bugle-man and Fifer.

Eyam, though I have invariably designated it as a village, is provincially called a town; and it had formerly a weekly market and an annual fair; both have been long discontinued. Annual horse races were also formerly held on Eyam Moor. The hippodrome, or old race course, and sod huts or booths remained in part until the enclosure of the moor.

Before cart-ways were made in the vicinity of Eyam, all articles were conveyed to and fro by horses with packsaddles, and the driver was called *jagger*. From the necks of the horses bells were suspended, which could be heard at a great distance; always announcing the jagger's return, and

creating a smile of joy on the faces of his wife and children.

The Dale, Eyam, the resort of the idle wanderer and the tasteful tourist, furnishes amongst its numerous objects of wonder, a few circumstances of an appalling nature. Nearly a century ago, a boy about sixteen years of age, named Samuel Blackwell, went in haste to obtain some yew to make billets. The yew tree grew on the top of one of the highest rocks in the Dale; and the poor boy in his haste ran down a small declivity to the tree at such a speed, that when there he could not stop himself, but plunged through the branches, to one of which he hung by the heel for a few minutes, and then fell to the bottom, where he was taken up nearly dashed to pieces. The rock is called, to this day, Blackwell's tor.

A little nearer to Middleton, in this singular dale, there is a very extensive cavern, called Caels-wark, in which a Scotch pedlar was found murdered, about fifty years since. The unfortunate man was well known; he had regularly attended the villages in the peak with his wares. The occasion of his murder occurred at Eyam: he had legally stopped some parties for selling goods at the wakes-eve, which so enflamed them with anger, that they followed him at night to the Moon Inn, Stoney Middleton, where they, through the connivance of the landlord, strangled and robbed him, and then carried his corpse into this cavern. About twenty years after, his body was found by Peter Merril, Eyam, who had had a remarkable dream on the subject. Nothing was scarcely known of his murder, until his body was found, when it was removed to Eyam Church, where it lay in a box for a many years, before it was buried.

The buckles of his shoes and other articles of his apparel proved it to be the body of the well-known pedlar; and other circumstances have since transpired in confirmation thereof. The murderers were never brought to justice, although in a great measure known.

Very near the Caelswark is the cavern called the WONDER, which is explored by numberless strangers every year. It was once richly adorned with stalactites of innumerable forms, which have been taken therefrom to the cabinets of the curious. This cavern has communication with others that are said to extend for miles: at least there are fissures, which pass from the dale under Eyam to that extent: and one of them as far as Bradwell. The Lover's-leap is a very high rock in the dale, from which a love-sick maid, Hannah Baddaley, threw herself, but miraculously sustained very little injury. The Rock-garden was once the greatest object of attraction in this romantic dell: it was the repository of all kinds of fossils, found in the Peak; and their dispersion has been greatly regretted by the inhabitants of Eyam. In this very interesting place is the Merlin—a cavern abounding with wonder; but it is not so often visited on account of its being at times almost filled with water, which appears to rise from some subterraneous cavity. I cannot think of this water without fancying I see the *Proteus anguinus*.* The pristine grandeur of this wonderful dale has been destroyed by the burning of lime, which is now carried on there to a great extent.

The tourist may leave this deep and interesting dingle and ascend an eminence on the opposite side of Eyam, and there behold the greatest con-

* Vide Sir H. Davy's posthumous work, "The Last Days of a Philosopher."

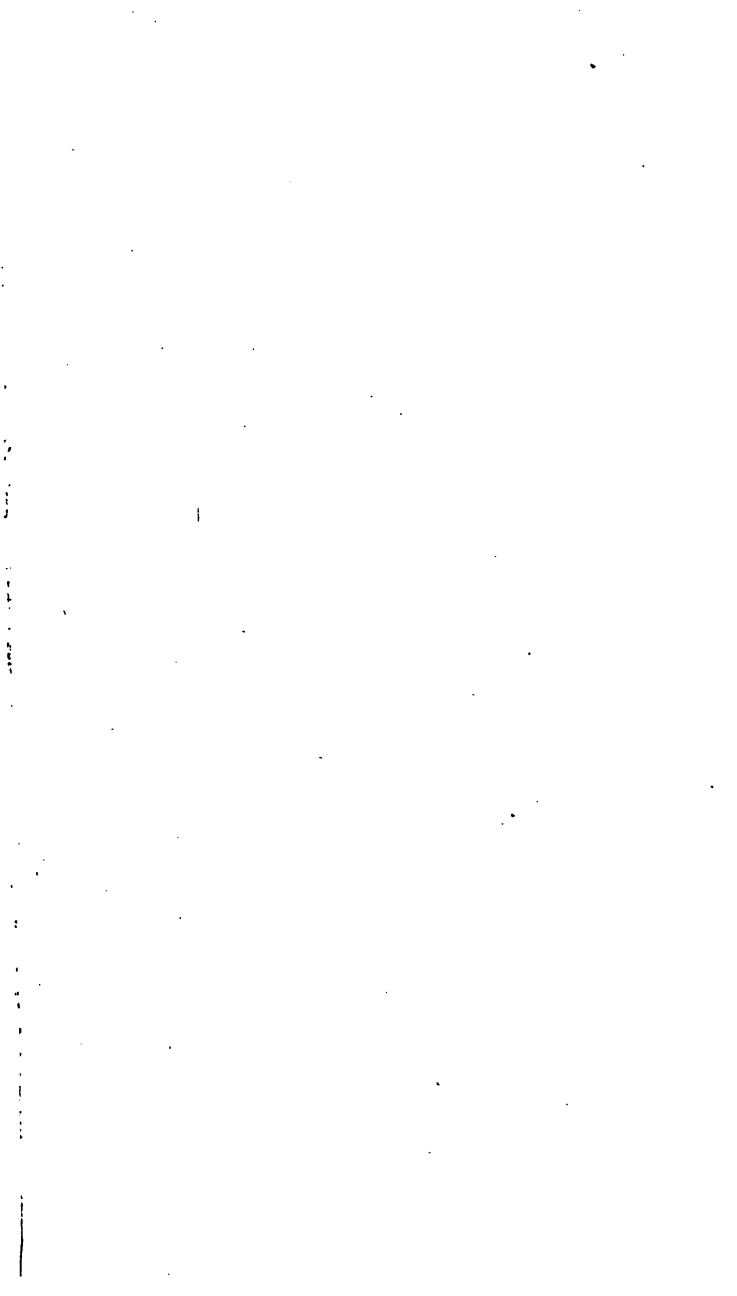
trast in scenery. This eminence is called Rock-Hall, whence may be seen the scattered villages in the dim distance, and endless hills shoulder-lifting the clouds. It is said that with a good glass Lincoln Minster may be seen from this place.

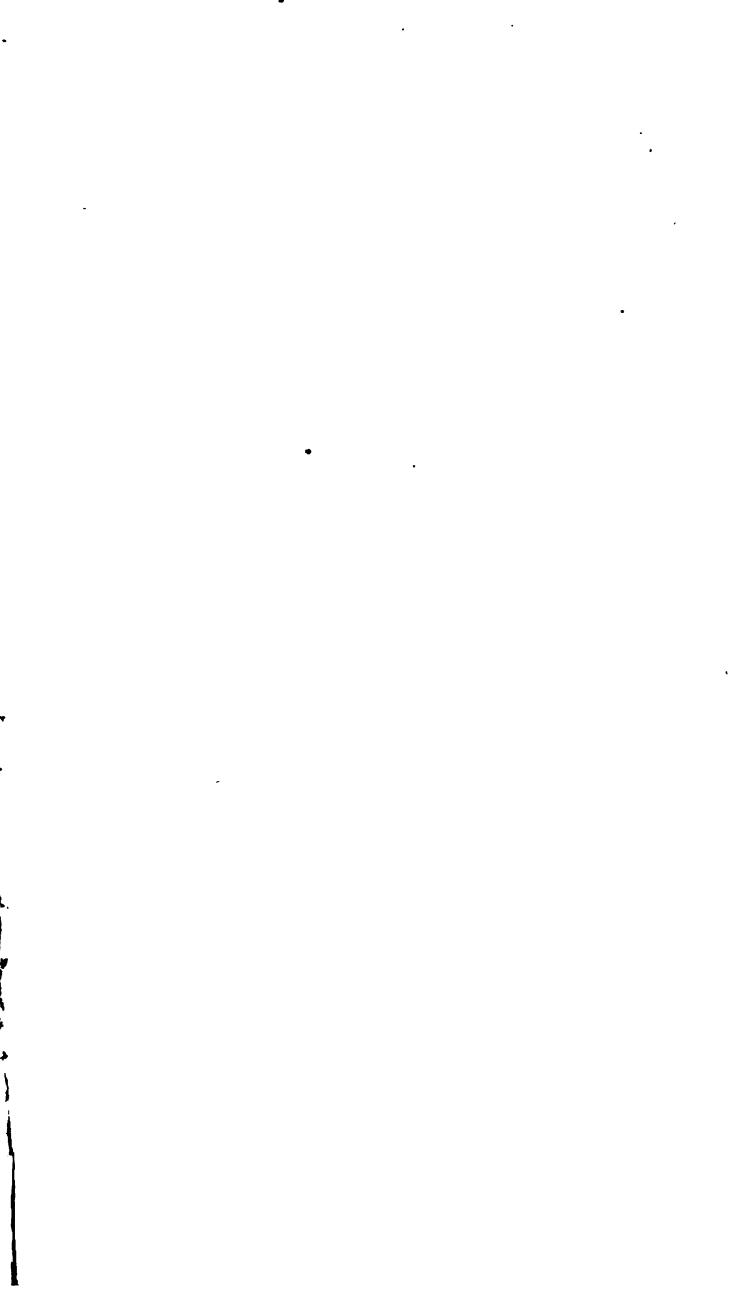
On the arrival of the Pretender, at Macclesfield, in A.D. 1745, the villagers of Eyam were thrown into the greatest consternation: they concealed their furniture and valuables in the mines. One man had his furniture and himself let down into a mine in the Pippin; and the clock struck one while hanging in the shaft: "I'feth," said he, "it would go if 'twere hung in an ash tree."

Much might be said respecting the inclosure of the moor, but it would be dry and uninteresting. There was a former inclosure of what was called the main-field; and the fields still called the "New Closes," were the first enclosed. Some common belonging to Longstone was claimed and obtained by Eyam, in consequence of the people of Longstone refusing to bury a woman who was found dead thereon. The parish of Eyam interred the woman, and claimed the common to the place where the body was found.

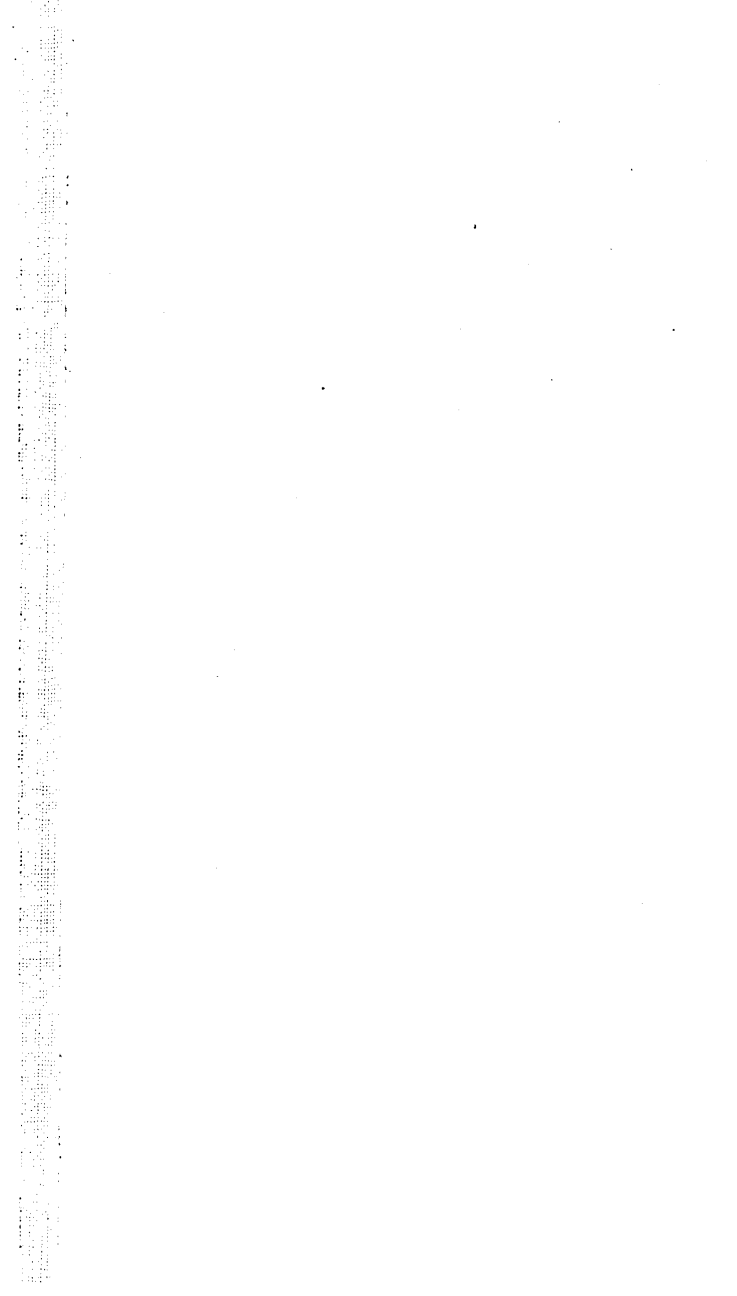
The Flora, cattle, land, and fossils of Eyam, are much the same in nature and character as those of the Peak in general. In quantity and excellency of water, Eyam has the advantage of almost every village in Derbyshire: and I have heard it frequently stated that there is a hot spring at the bottom of the New Engine climbing shaft, of supposed sanative properties.

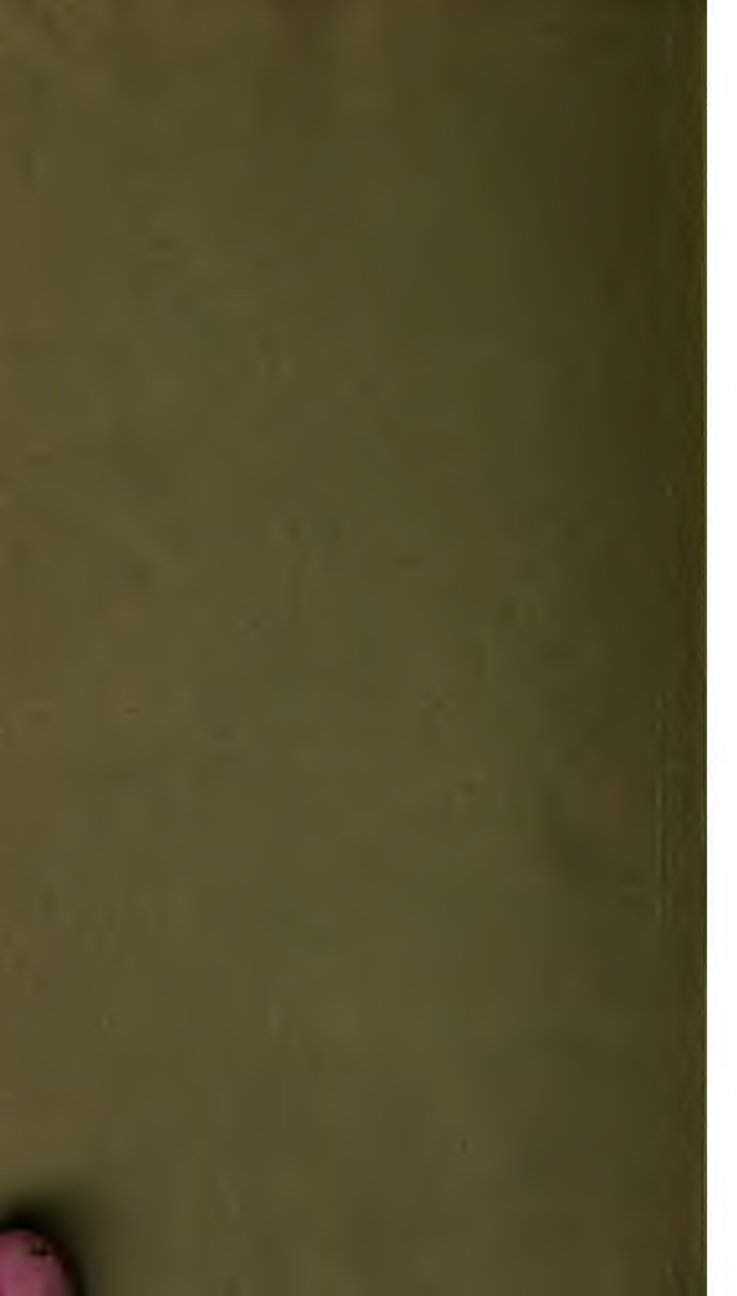
"My task is done; my song hath ceased; my theme
Has died into an echo."—BYRON.











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